Famous Artists Course

Famous Artists Schools, Inc., Westport, Connecticut

The artist's materials and how to use them

Lesson 1

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Pencil

Ink

Transparent wash

Opaque water color

Each of these pictures was made with one of the four mediums (art materials) most commonly used by commercial artists and illustrators. In this lesson we will introduce you to the use of these basic mediums.

Reproduced same size as original

This lesson is essentially a handbook of the four basic mediums, and was designed to be used and referred to throughout your entire training period. We do not expect you to become a master technician with all or any of these mediums right at the start—it will be enough, for this lesson, if you only acquaint yourself with these basic mediums and learn the simple fundamentals of handling them. You will have plenty of opportunity to improve your skill as you work with them throughout your Course.

The artist's materials and how to use them

All your life as an artist – no matter what kind of pictures you make, or how infinitely varied they are in style or technique – one thing will always remain constant: you will have to use art materials and the artist's tools to make your pictures.

The love of the artist for his materials is as old as art itself. Behind every good picture you see – whether it is an illustration in a magazine, a simple creative drawing for a booklet, or a major masterpiece of painting in a museum – there stands an artist with an expert knowledge of materials and methods. Without the artist's devotion to his materials, and his skill in using them, these pictures could not exist. That is why, all through history, the artist has worked to perfect his materials and his methods.

If you are a complete beginner, you may find your materials somewhat strange and confusing at first. Don't let that worry you – every beginning artist has had the same experience. Norman Rockwell, Al Parker, and all the other men who created your Course make pictures that command high prices and delight millions of people – yet when they first took pen or brush in hand, they did not know how to control these tools any better than you do now. The first strokes they put down on blank paper were hesitant and uncertain. The first pictures they drew were crude and unprofessional. These artists had to experiment with their materials and find out what they could do with them. They encountered many difficulties and frustrations, and had to discard much of what they did in the beginning.

But some difficulty is part of any exciting adventure of experiment and discovery. Before long, these artists felt more at home with their materials. Their pencils, pens, brushes, and paints no longer seemed to have a will of their own, but behaved like faithful, helpful friends. Soon these men were painting and drawing pictures as good as they had ever dreamed of doing – and better than they had ever dared to believe they really could.

This is only the beginning

You are about to embark on the same wonderful voyage of discovery that these famous artists did when they started out. On that voyage, do not look for short cuts. Don't try to force the natural time it takes your hand to get accustomed to handling these new tools and materials. Be patient – very patient – with yourself. No one is looking over your shoulder to embarrass you. We, your teachers, do not expect perfection from you, and we know from personal experience what your problems are. We will never judge you for lack of speed or perfection.

So, to begin with, relax. Lose yourself in what you are doing and have fun. Remember, this is just your first lesson – you are only beginning to learn the use of materials. All through your Course, as well as for the rest of your life, you will be working at perfecting yourself in the techniques to which we introduce you here. We do not expect you to become a master craftsman in one lesson. No artist ever did.

Experiment with your materials

In this lesson you will find not only new knowledge but a new love as well – the love of the artist for his materials. As you experiment with the tools of your chosen craft, you will discover a great joy in handling them. Like every other artist before you, you will respond with pleasure to the positive, clean directness of the pen . . . the spirited, sensuous stroke of the brush . . . the delicacy and speed of the pencil, that marvelous "thinking tool" of infinite capabilities. You will find drawing in transparent wash a wonderful way to express vigorous, carefree feeling. And the myriad beautiful effects you will produce with opaque water colors will fill you with delight.

Experiment with these materials and effects, play around with them. Discover what they can do for you and what you can do with them. Above all, enjoy them. And remember that this first lesson is only the beginning. As you learn more about your materials, you will gradually become better able to express your ideas and achieve your artistic goals. You can eventually master these methods and materials as well as any other artist, no matter how distinguished he is. All it takes is practice and experimentation – plus the improved skill and better judgment that you will acquire with experience.

You learn to draw by drawing

As your skill with your tools and materials advances, you will begin to develop your own personal style as an artist. You will find which mediums give you the most pleasure to work with, and which techniques are best suited for the picture ideas you want to draw and paint. As you get further along in your training, we will explain more fully the things you must know and do in using these materials and techniques if your drawings are to reproduce well in newspapers, books, and all other forms of printing. We will give you all the knowledge you need to become a successful practicing commercial artist and illustrator.

Now you are on your way. We have made that way as straight and direct as we could. It will be far straighter than our own way was – but still it will not be easy. In art, even with the finest guidance in the world, you must still "do it yourself." You must experiment and practice – and you must accept and overcome the frustrations that will confront you. Every artist worth his salt has done so – and so can you. Always remember: You learn to draw by drawing.

Lesson 1 Famous Artists Course

The artist's materials and how to use them

These simple materials are all you need for drawing in pencil: three erasers (*from top to bottom:* Artgum, soft flexible eraser, and kneaded eraser), thumbtacks or masking tape for fastening your paper to your drawing board, three drawing pencils, a single-edge razor and a sandpaper pad for sharpening your pencils.

Pencil drawing

The most valuable tool you will ever use as an artist is your pencil. It is your "thinking" tool. Whether you finish your picture in ink, wash, color, or any other medium, you will start by planning or thinking it out on paper with a pencil.

The pencil is the most versatile of all drawing tools. With it you can make lines that are thick or thin, dark or light. You can create subtle grays or the richest blacks. There is almost no end to the exciting variety of textures and shading you can create with a pencil. If you wish to make a change in your drawing, pencil lines are easy to erase. Add to these advantages the fact that pencils are cheap and can be bought anywhere, and you can see at once why pencil is an ideal medium for the beginner as well as the professional.

Commercial artists and illustrators use the pencil almost every day of their lives. They make preliminary sketches and studies for their pictures with it. No matter in what medium they finish the picture, they first draw it in pencil. Sketches submitted to a client for approval are often drawn in pencil. It is equally good for making loose, sketchy studies or the most meticulous, detailed finished drawing. Many outstanding pictures in the history of art have been pencil drawings.

You and the pencil are old friends. You may never have done any drawing before, but you have been using a pencil to write with since your childhood. A few pencils, some sheets of paper, a sharp knife and an eraser, and you are ready to draw anywhere.

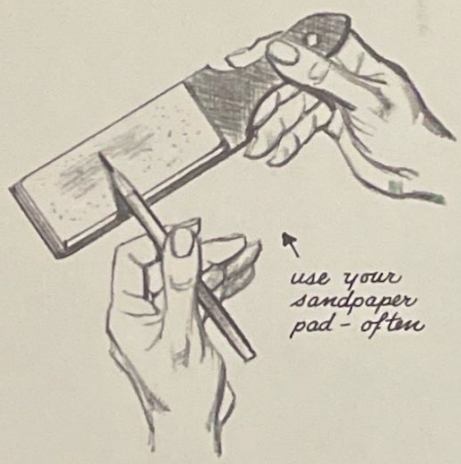
Your materials

For this lesson, you will need an HB, a 2B, and a 4B pencil. You may find one or two other grades helpful, but they are not essential. You will need some sheets of bond paper for practice, a single-edge razor blade or knife, a flexible soft rubber eraser, a kneaded eraser, a piece of Artgum and a sandpaper block for sharpening your pencil. A few thumbtacks or a roll of masking tape will be useful for attaching your paper to the drawing board.

Pencils

The pencils you will use the most are shown on the left. These are ordinary drawing pencils, and they come in different leads, classified from hard to soft. The softer the pencil the thicker the lead – and therefore the broader the line you can draw with it. The softest pencils make a black line, and the point is soon used up, so that it needs frequent sharpening. The harder the pencil the grayer the line it makes. Hard pencils can be sharpened to a very fine point, and hold their point longer. Because they are hard, they are likely to dig into your paper when you apply pressure. So, if you want a darker, richer line, don't bear down on your hard pencil – instead, use a softer one. Naturally, you can vary the darkness of your lines with any pencil by varying the pressure.

There are thirteen grades of pencils commonly used. Six are hard – ranging from H, which is only slightly hard, to 6H, which is extremely hard. Six of the grades are soft – ranging from B, which is moderately soft, to 6B, which is extremely soft. In between the hard pencils and the soft ones there is a medium one, the HB pencil. Examples of the lines these pencils will make are shown below. As a professional you will seldom use more than four or five different grades.



Sharpening your pencil

A regular pencil sharpener will give you consistently sharp, even points quite suitable for much of your pencil drawing. If you prefer, you can sharpen your pencil with a single-edge razor blade or a sharp knife and finish by shaping the point on a sandpaper pad. Roll the pencil between your fingers as you move it back and forth on the sandpaper.

If you want a chisel point (explained later), first sharpen your pencil with the razor and then rub your pencil on the sandpaper without rolling it.

Erasers and erasing

There are three good types of erasers for pencil work: the kneaded eraser, the Artgum eraser, and the flexible soft rubber eraser. All are popular with artists, and each is better than the rest for certain clean-up jobs.

Kneaded eraser. This eraser has two special features: (1) It picks up and absorbs the lead of your pencil work. It does not, like the other two types, leave tiny particles of rubber on your drawing. (2) It can be moulded into a point to clean up or "pick out" even the tiniest area or detail in your drawing. (You can make this eraser pliable by kneading it with your fingers for a few seconds.) These are the reasons so many artists find the kneaded eraser ideal for cleaning their drawings and making erasures while they work.

As you work on a drawing, you will occasionally get pencil smudges on it. You will need to remove these smudges without erasing any part of your picture. In such cases, rub your kneaded eraser gently over the surface. It will pick up the light film of dirt and only slightly lighten your pencil lines. If you rub too hard the lines will be erased.

At times you will find it necessary to erase a heavy black line or tone (shading) that you have made by pressing very hard on a soft pencil. To do this, first press a soft piece of kneaded eraser repeatedly on the line or tone. Bit by bit you will lift off the looser particles. When the eraser will absorb no more of the lead, you can safely start erasing, but be sure to use a gentle motion.

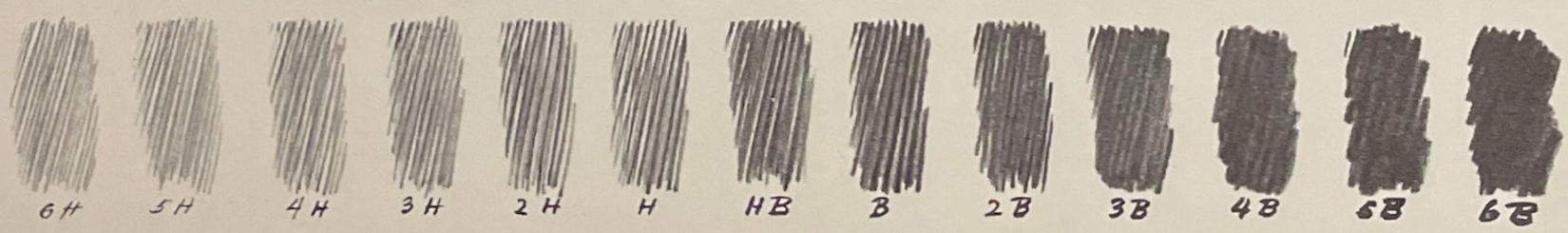
Because the kneaded eraser is soft, it will not always completely erase heavily drawn lines. In such cases, finish off with the flexible soft rubber eraser.

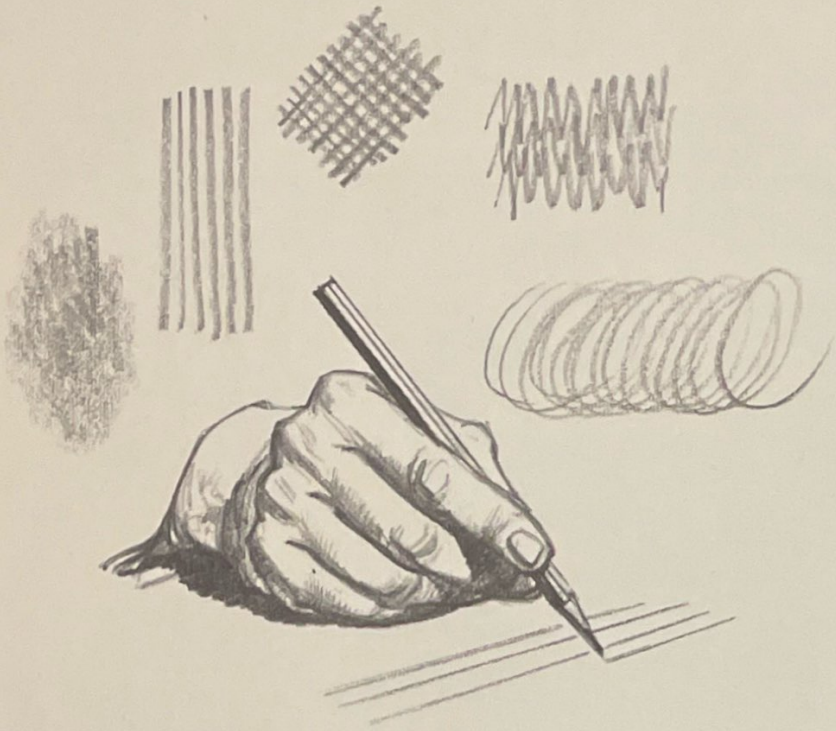
Flexible soft rubber eraser. This kind is often called the "ruby" eraser, though it also comes in pink, gray and other colors and has many different trade names. It is similar to the eraser on the end of the common writing pencil. Its main purpose is to enable you to erase completely lines made with heavy pressure. For erasing small areas, you can easily cut the eraser to a sharp, slanted point.

To avoid damaging the surface of your paper, erase slowly and carefully, with a gentle circular motion. After you finish, always remove any particles of eraser and grit by flicking or dusting off your drawing with repeated light strokes of a clean handkerchief or a piece of similar material. Don't rub or you may smear your drawing. If you do not remove the particles of eraser and grit, they will interfere with your pencil, and it will be impossible for you to add neat, clean lines to match the others in your drawing.

Artgum. This soft eraser is a favorite for cleaning up a drawing after it is finished. You will find it especially good for removing all the pencil lines when you have finished a pen and ink or brush and ink drawing. Artgum is firm enough to remove the pencil lines but not hard enough to injure the ink lines.

Grades of pencils used by most professional artists.





Hold your pencil any way you find comfortable

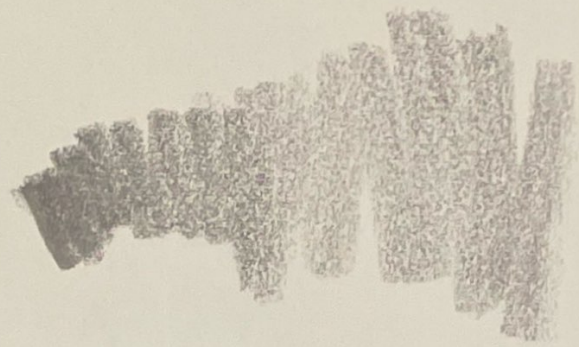
Hold the pencil in your normal writing position or any other way that feels natural and easy to you. Don't grip it too hard. For light lines, press lightly on your pencil — for heavy lines, press harder. This is a good position for drawing lines that must be carefully controlled, precise.

When working larger or more freely — as when sketching in the outlines of a drawing or putting in shading on a large drawing — you may find it very convenient to hold the pencil between your thumb and first two fingers, but under the palm.

A variety of effects with the pencil

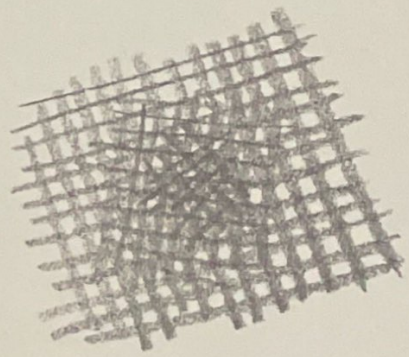
On these two pages you see a small sample of the many different effects you can get with your pencil. They reflect the wide variety of movements possible with the pencil — quick, light, heavy, slow, deliberate, etc. Examine these strokes and then try some of your own, but don't copy any of these exactly.

Experiments like these are not just doodling. They have a practical goal — to acquaint you thoroughly with the exciting possibilities of this versatile tool.

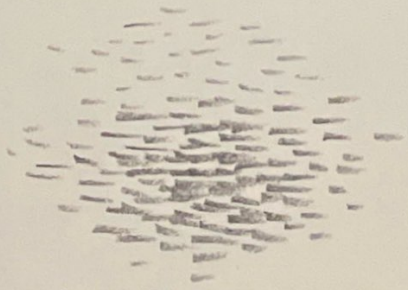


Vigorous up-and-down strokes made with the side of a soft pencil.

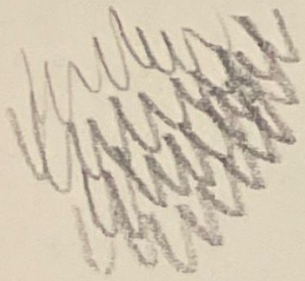
Series of free-flowing curved strokes (medium pencil).



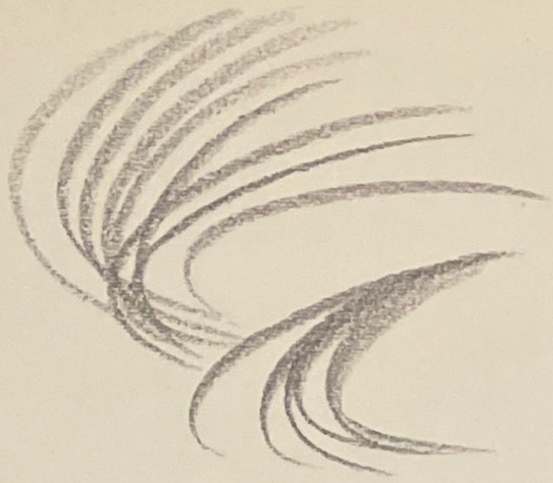
Crosshatched straight lines (medium pencil).



Short strokes, scarcely more than dashes. Amount of space between determines lightness or darkness of effect (soft pencil).



Made with a movement like handwriting — darkness or lightness controlled by pressure (medium pencil).

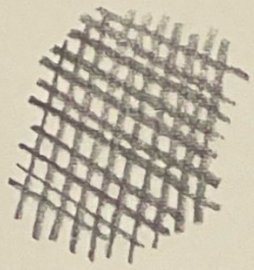


Swirls drawn with a vigorous, sweeping motion (very soft pencil).

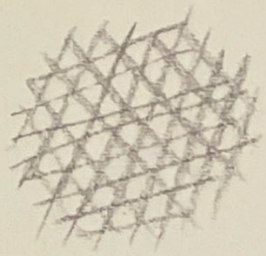
Jerky, dragging strokes, curved and varied in thickness (soft pencil).

Overlapping circular scribbles of graded pressure created these tones (soft pencil).

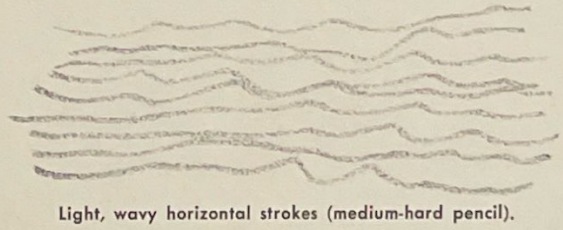
Up-and-down scribbling with chisel point, applying varied pressure (very soft pencil).



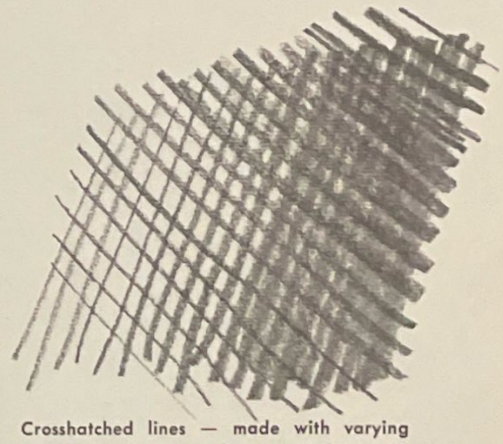
Crosshatched lines running in two directions (soft pencil).



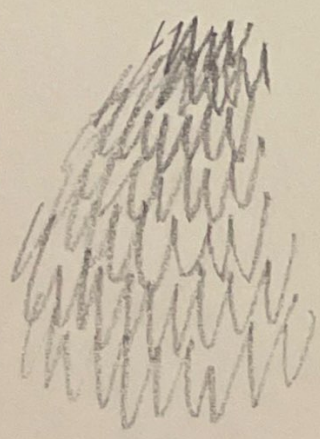
Crosshatched lines running in three directions — (medium pencil).



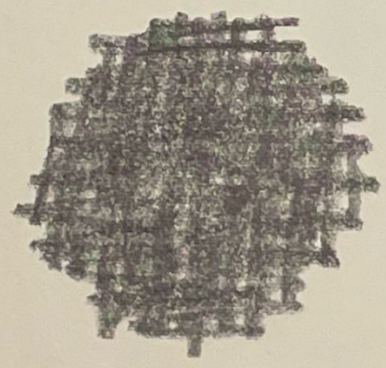
Light, wavy horizontal strokes (medium-hard pencil).



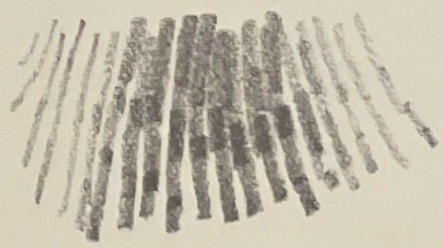
Crosshatched lines — made with varying pressure and distance between (soft pencil).



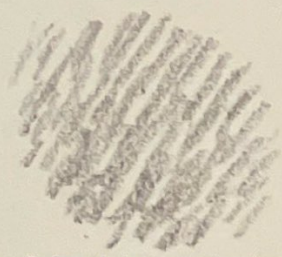
Handwriting movement — darkness or lightness controlled by pressure (medium pencil).



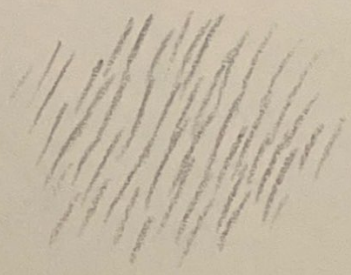
Crosshatching — strokes made close together (very soft pencil).



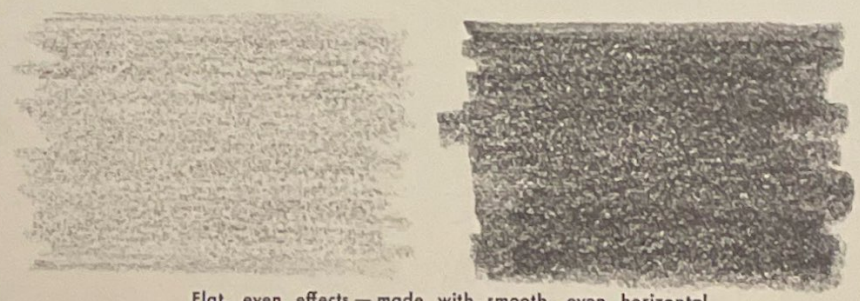
Jerky downward movement — varied pressure controls darkness (very soft pencil).



Series of short, overlapping strokes made with chisel point (soft pencil).



Series of short, open strokes (sharp-pointed medium-soft pencil).



Flat, even effects — made with smooth, even horizontal strokes (medium pencil and soft pencil).

Papers

There are many kinds of paper that are good for drawing in pencil. Most of them are inexpensive. Experiment with different papers until you find the ones which you like best.

When you select papers, there are three things you should consider: surface, thickness, and erasing quality.

Surface. For pencil work you want a paper that has "tooth"—that is, paper that is rough enough to take pencil. If the paper is too smooth or glossy, it will not take pencil well. A good general rule to follow is that the smoother the paper, the softer your pencil should be.

Thickness. The thinnest paper made for pencil work is tracing paper. You can see through it, and so it is ideal when you are tracing over another drawing. Visualizing paper (sometimes called layout paper) is thicker and whiter, but is still transparent enough to see and trace through. Bond paper – the kind commonly used for typewriting – is so thick that you can just trace very dark lines through it.

Ledger paper is thick and opaque – that is, you cannot see through it or use it for tracing. Another opaque pencil paper is Bristol board, which comes in several thicknesses, called plies. One ply, the thinnest, is slightly heavier than bond paper. Bristol board ranges up to five ply, but one, two, and three ply are most commonly used for pencil. It comes in many surfaces, from very smooth to quite rough.

The thickest drawing paper is illustration board, which is drawing paper mounted on cardboard to make it stiff. It, too, can be had in many surfaces.

Erasing quality. Papers range from very soft, such as newsprint, on which newspapers are printed, to very hard, such as high-quality Bristol board. You can erase well on the hard papers, but on soft ones it is difficult.

Good pencil papers for you to use. For practice work, use inexpensive papers such as ordinary unruled ledger paper and bond typewriter paper. White or light-colored wrapping paper such as your grocer uses will do, provided it isn't waxy or too soft. You can cut it to any size that is convenient for you.

For preliminary sketching, most artists use visualizing paper. This comes in pads of various sizes, has a good tooth, and is hard enough to take erasures. It is slightly transparent, and therefore is useful for tracing over a previous sketch.

For your finished work, try a paper similar to the kind on which this lesson is printed. It has a good tooth and will take pencil well. At the same time, it is hard enough to stand erasing, and it is thick enough not to bend or wrinkle when you handle it. Kid-finish Bristol board, which has a similar surface, is also excellent. Try one ply and two ply.

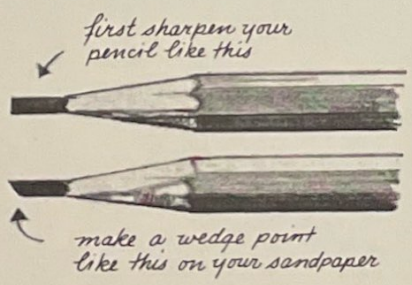
Don't draw with your paper resting directly on your drawing board. Any rough or uneven spots in the board will show up in your pencil lines. You should put several sheets of paper or a piece of smooth cardboard under the paper on which you are going to draw. This will give you a smooth, pleasant, even working surface.

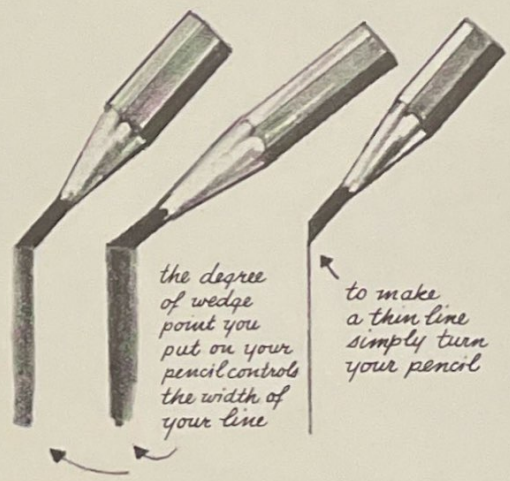
Study the pencil drawings on the following pages carefully. You will see that pencils can be used to create many different lines and tones of light and dark. Notice that some tones are made with many pencil strokes, and that these strokes are sometimes side by side, sometimes overlapping. Notice, too, that some of the lines are thin and light, while others are wide and dark. The amount of space between the strokes, the grade of pencil, and the kind of point all play a part in creating many exciting effects.

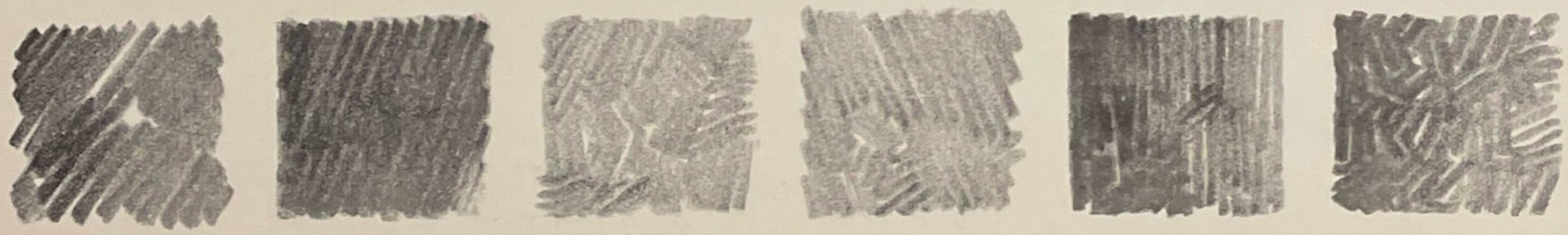
Chisel-point drawing

Besides drawing with your pencil sharpened to a fine point, you can use the chisel-point or broad-stroke method. This is a fine method for making finished pencil drawings because it enables you to obtain almost the quality of brush stroking in your work. Soft pencils such as the 3B or 4B should be used. The illustrations below demonstrate how to give your pencil a chisel point and how to draw both thin lines and thick lines with it.

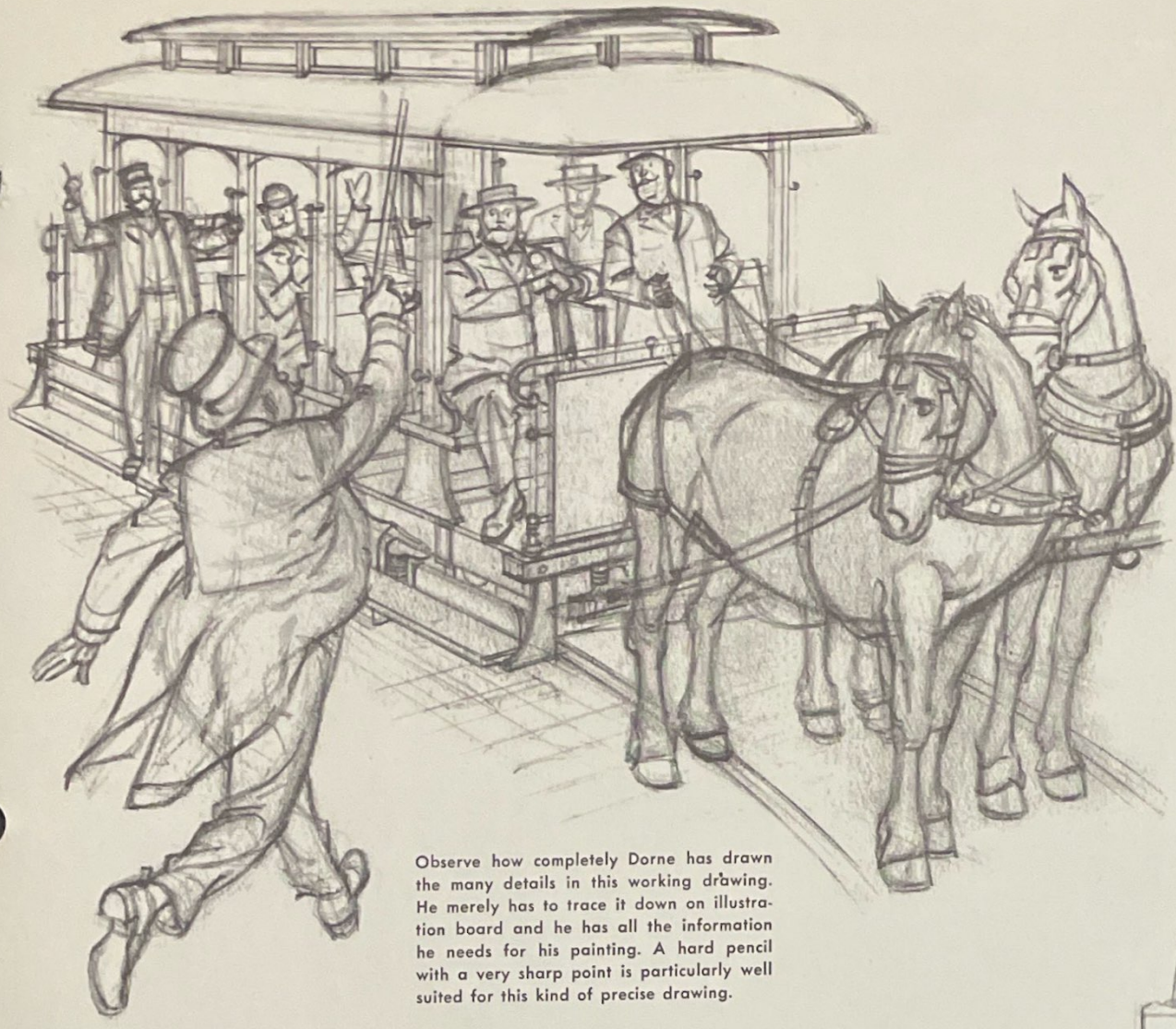
Chisel point or broad stroke




the degree of wedge point you put on your pencil controls the width of your line
to make a thin line simply turn your pencil



The broad strokes above were drawn the same size as shown, with a chisel-point 3B pencil. Practice these strokes and others to get the feel of the chisel point. Use your sandpaper pad often.



Observe how completely Dorne has drawn the many details in this working drawing. He merely has to trace it down on illustration board and he has all the information he needs for his painting. A hard pencil with a very sharp point is particularly well suited for this kind of precise drawing.

Dorne first drew the general form of the head and features with light pencil lines like those which locate the position of the eyes. He gradually made his lines heavier and more decisive as he worked out the correct size, shape, and position of the head and features.

In this working drawing Dorne has used his HB pencil to "feel out" the form of everything. Because of this, some lines which won't show in his final painting are visible here. Notice the lighter lines which locate the man's right arm and leg and the table base.

Drawing in pencil — for different purposes

Depending on the purpose you have in mind, you will work differently with your pencil — and use different pencils. The three top pictures here are working drawings, intended as a guide for paintings. Every detail has been carefully planned and precisely drawn on tracing paper with a hard, sharp-pointed pencil. There will be no need for changes in the painting stage because the artist has done all his thinking and drawing on his tracing paper. The desert scene at the bottom, on the other hand, is a finished pencil drawing. The artist made it with a soft pencil sharpened to a chisel point. This enabled him to get fine lines and thick lines where he wanted — to "paint in" the effects of light and dark by varying the pressure on his pencil.

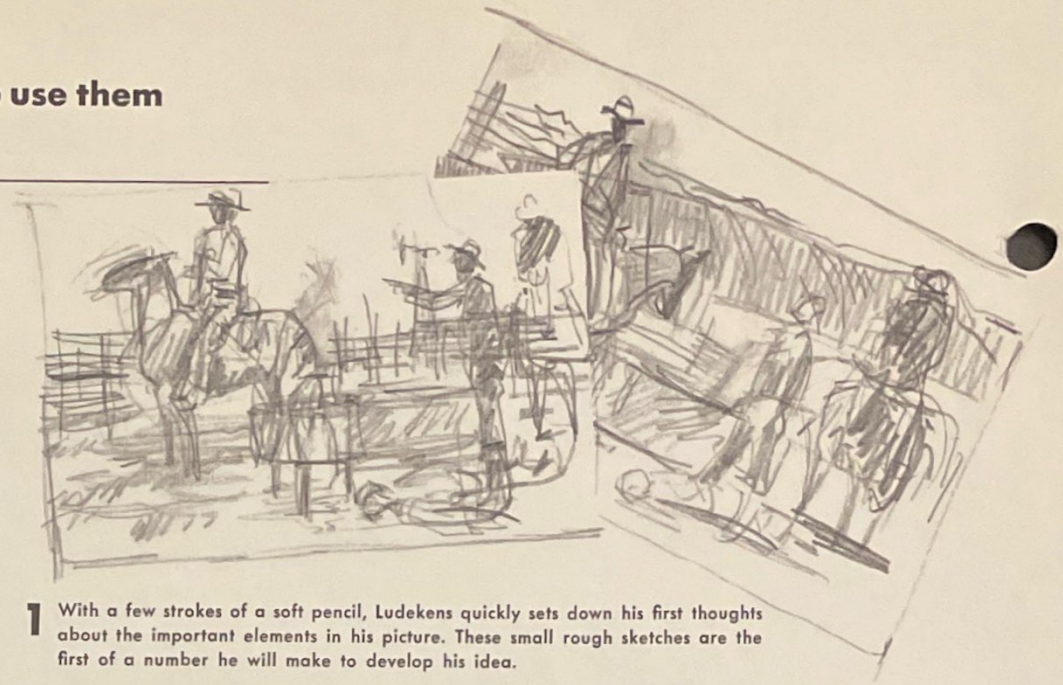
All four drawings are the work of Albert Dorne.

To make this desert scene, the artist used a chisel-point pencil, and varied his pressure on it for various effects. The dark shadow at bottom right, for example, was put in with closely spaced crosshatched strokes applied with strong pressure. The gray sagebrush was made with up-and-down strokes applied with varying pressure. Narrow strokes were drawn with the tip of the chisel point.

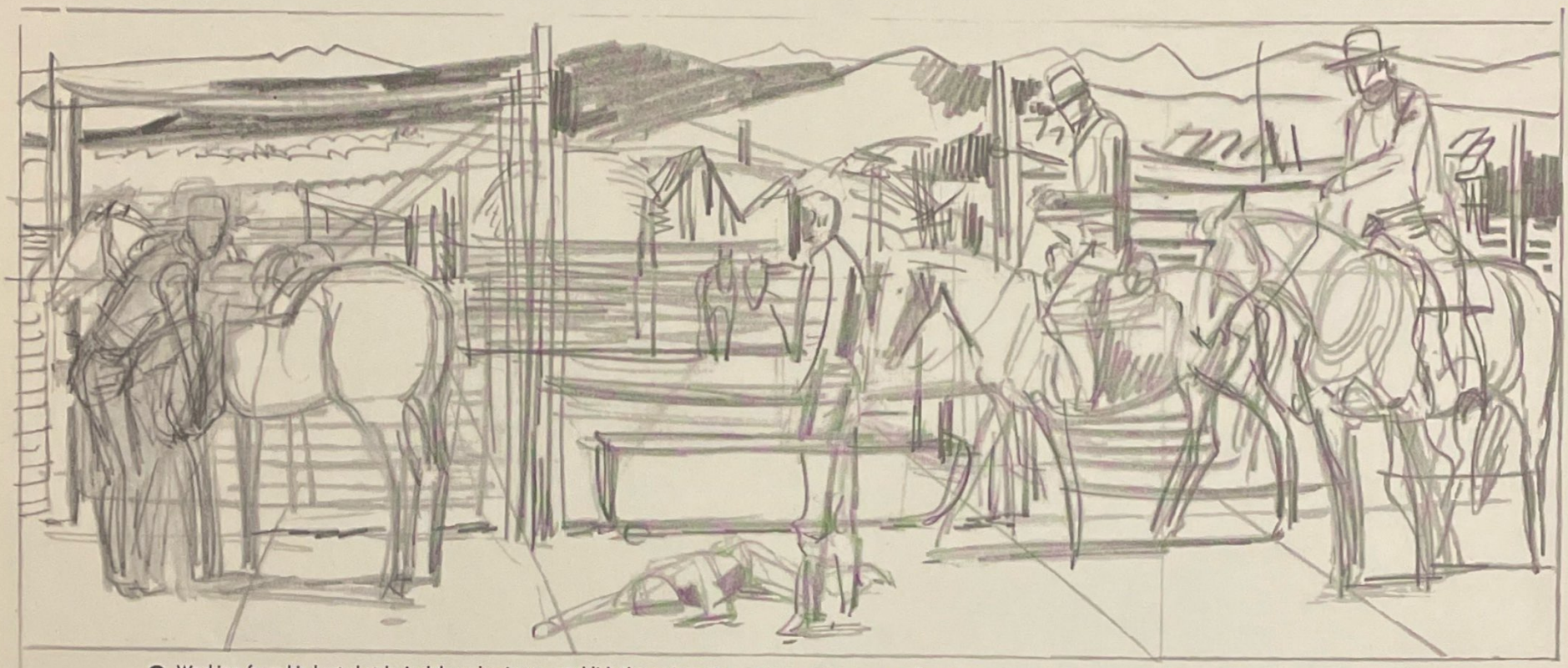
Thinking with your pencil

Good thinking is as important as good drawing in developing a picture. When you plan a picture, you want to record your thoughts in rough sketches as quickly and easily as possible. Your pencil is ideal for this – it can speedily create the many effects you need to think out before you can make a good picture. That's why we call the pencil your "thinking" tool.

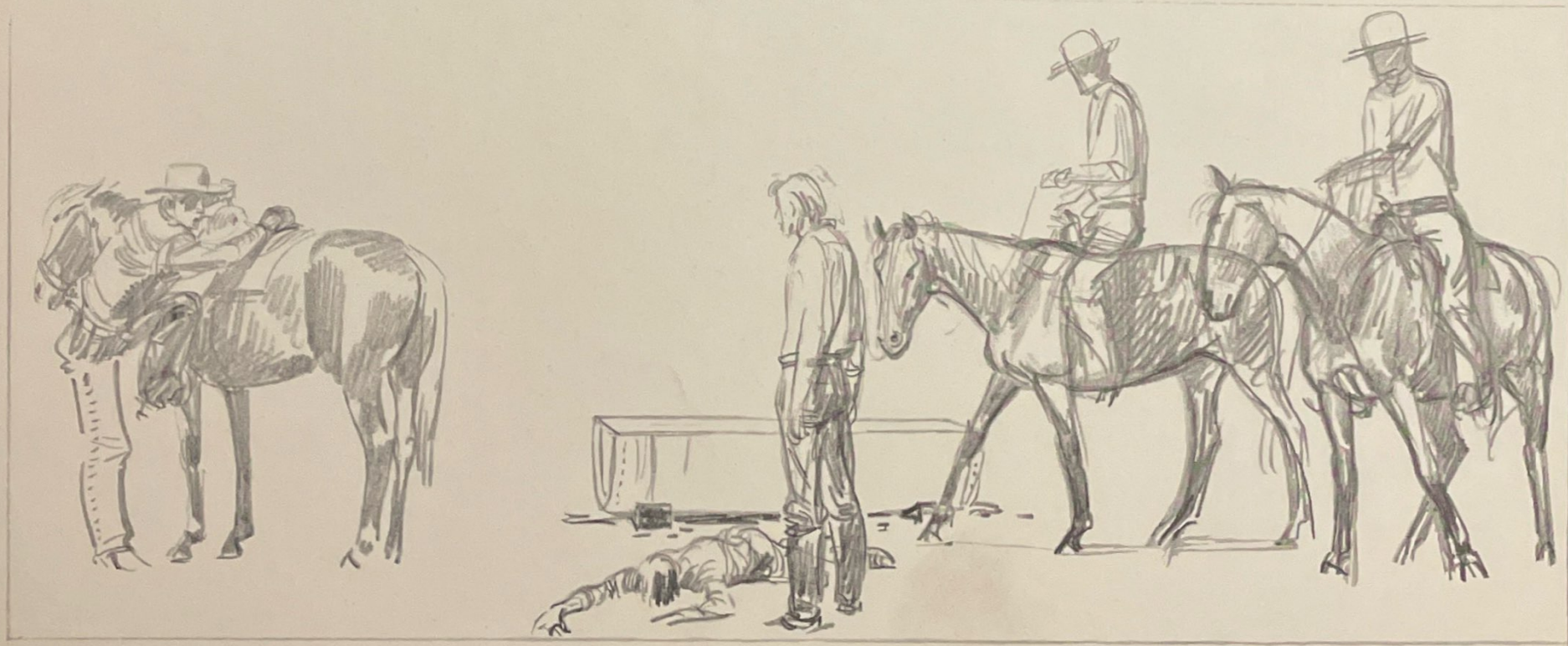
On this page you see how Fred Ludekens records and develops some of his early thoughts about a picture. These are working drawings – the artist made them for his own guidance, so he did not worry about their unfinished appearance. He changed and erased whenever he felt it would help his picture.



1 With a few strokes of a soft pencil, Ludekens quickly sets down his first thoughts about the important elements in his picture. These small rough sketches are the first of a number he will make to develop his idea.



2 Working from his best sketch, Ludekens begins to establish the main action and the background of his drawing. With a few lines he indicates an entire mountain range, a figure, or a horse. Notice that he has been erasing and changing the figure on the left. He draws with a 2B pencil on visualizing paper.



3 Drawing on visualizing paper placed over the previous sketch, Ludekens concentrates on developing his main figures. With his pencil he works out shapes and details more precisely, to make his picture more real and lifelike. The background will be put in later.

How Ben Stahl thinks with a pencil

Although Ben Stahl's technique of painting is quite different from that of Fred Ludekens, he "thinks out" a picture with his pencil in much the same way. Here we show you how he develops a sketch on which he will base a painting. Stahl never hesitates to use his eraser to change figures in whole or in part, or to introduce new elements in order to achieve the best effect.

1 Stahl begins with sketches like this one, in which he roughly plans the main elements of his picture. Here he is feeling his way toward an effective arrangement of these elements. It is easiest to make changes at this early stage—though you will notice Stahl makes them at later stages, too.

2 Here, on another sheet of paper, Stahl develops the best of his sketches, making more changes as he works. The figure outside the left margin is a more detailed version of one of the figures in the drawing. You can easily work out individual parts of your pictures with pencil this way.

3 Stahl is now using his pencil to give the elements of his drawing greater solidity and detail. Shapes become rounder and more real as he adds shading. New elements are still being introduced, such as the second elephant in the background. The circus is coming to life before our eyes.

4 In this final sketch Stahl has darkened certain areas with his pencil so the important sections will stand out more clearly. He has changed the angle of the girl's head at the right and altered other details. He prefers soft, broad effects as compared to Fred Ludekens, who thinks more in terms of line. With practice, you, too, will find your own way of picture planning and drawing with the pencil.

Making a pencil drawing

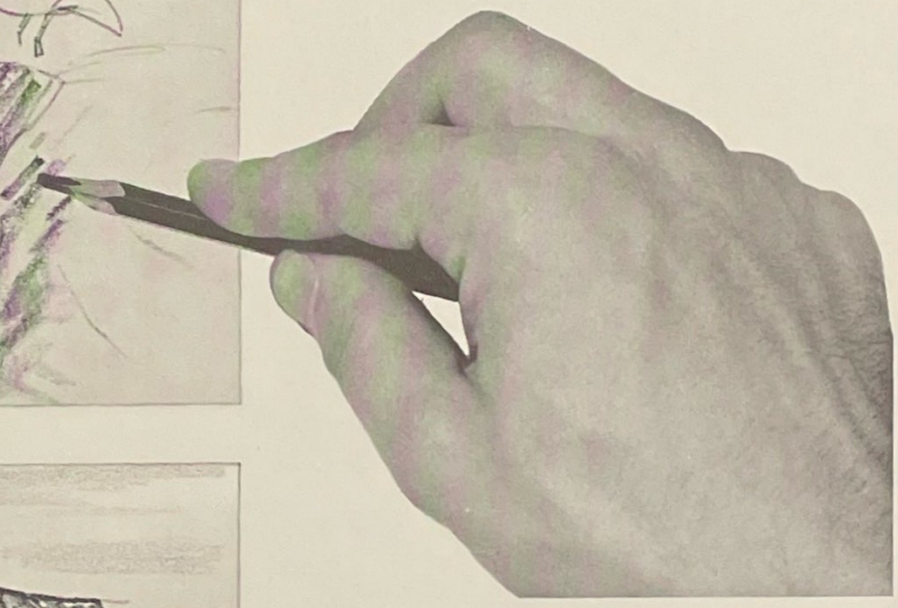
This demonstration shows you a logical, orderly way to make a finished pencil drawing. In the first stage you sketch in the main shapes of your picture. If their positions or proportions have to be corrected, now is the time to correct them – it is much easier to erase your first light pencil lines than to change the more detailed drawing later on.

In the next stage, you develop your "values" – the lightness or darkness of the things in your picture. In the later stages you give them their final shape and draw in their textures and details.

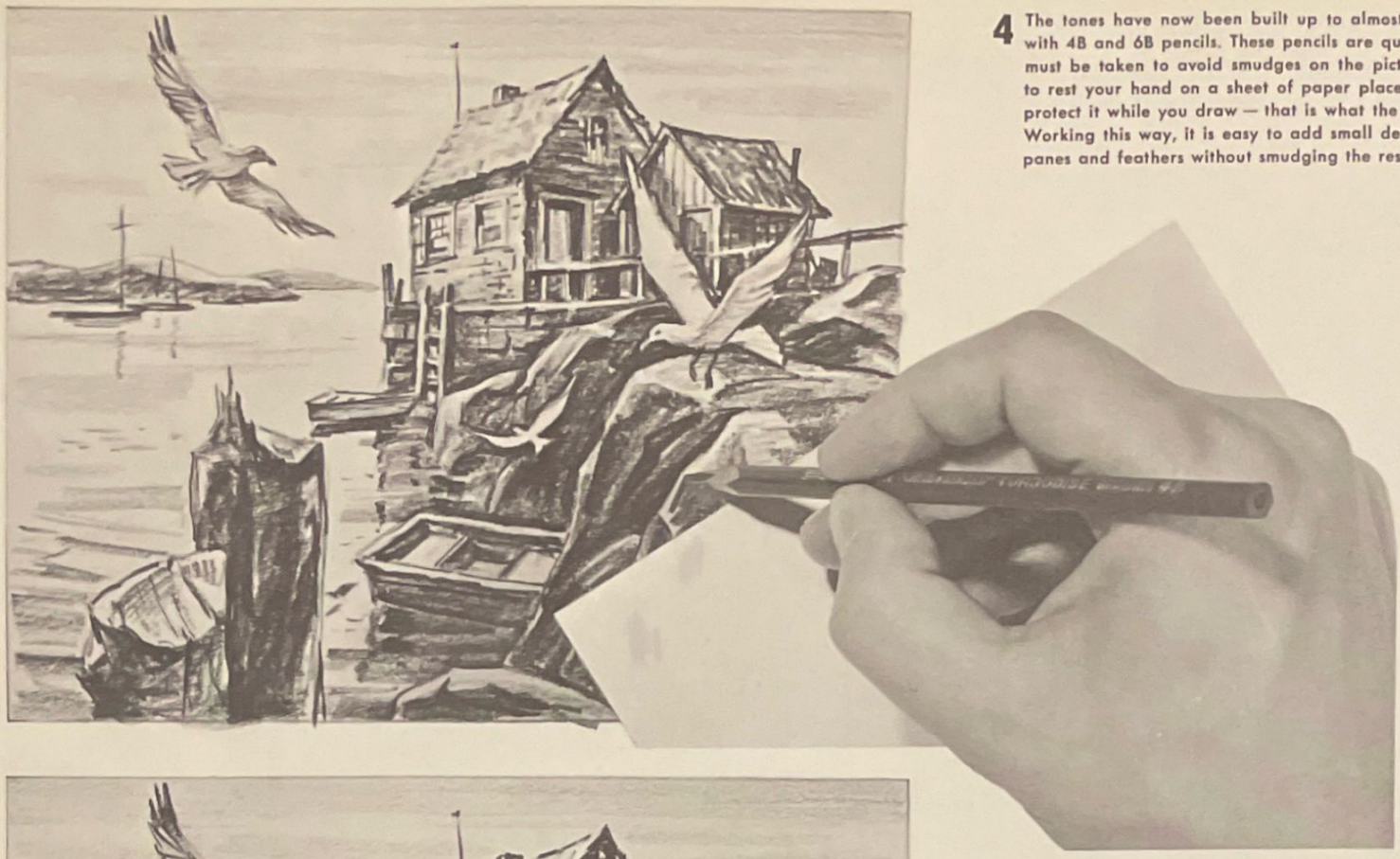
Put in the main shapes first, the details last, when you make a picture – whether in pencil or any other medium.

1 First, sketch in lightly the main lines of the large objects in the picture. Work broadly over the whole picture and avoid drawing any details. These lines were drawn with an HB pencil.

2 After the main lines are drawn, put in the tones or shading. These tones were made with strokes of a 2B pencil sharpened to a chisel point. We've added two more seagulls.



3 Now, more has been added. The short chisel strokes on the roof suggest the uneven texture of old shingles. Longer chisel strokes change direction with the planes of the rocks. The clouds are drawn with long horizontal strokes of the chisel-point pencil. We still keep the tones broad and avoid details. Since the general pattern of light and dark is worked out, we now use a 4B pencil to make the tones richer and darker.



4 The tones have now been built up to almost their finished values with 4B and 6B pencils. These pencils are quite soft, so more care must be taken to avoid smudges on the picture. It's a good idea to rest your hand on a sheet of paper placed over the picture to protect it while you draw — that is what the artist has done here. Working this way, it is easy to add small details like the window-panes and feathers without smudging the rest of the drawing.

5 Even with the picture almost complete, sometimes a change may seem necessary. To simplify a confusing area around the boat, we picked up some of the pencil tone with a kneaded eraser. The eraser is first pressed down and lifted off to remove as much tone as possible without smearing. The tone that is left is then erased in the usual way.

6 The finished sketch, with final details and accents. Throughout this demonstration you can see the flexibility of the pencil as a drawing tool. It is easy to think with. It gives you a variety of effects according to the way you sharpen it and how you hold it. Last, but not least, it also gives you the opportunity to make changes when they are necessary.

You learn to draw by drawing

Lesson 1 Famous Artists Course

The artist's materials and how to use them

Austin Briggs, because of his experience, is able to make us see just what he wants us to with only a few pencil strokes. Simply by varying the thickness of the lines, he suggests form, creates a feeling of depth, and adds rich contrasts. Briggs used a carbon pencil, which makes darker, less shiny lines than the usual lead pencil.

This drawing by Al Parker was made on plate-finish Strathmore, using graphite pencils HB, 2B and 6B. The artist has carefully built up his tones with thousands of easy, casual pencil strokes which follow or "model" the contour of the form and create a very detailed, realistic picture.

Pencil Style

On these two pages you see five pencil drawings, each by a different artist and each in a different style. These pictures show that there is no one best way to use your pencil — each artist works in his own personal style, which he develops through experience.

To develop your own style, you must experiment and practice. Try different grades of pencils, pencil points, strokes and papers until you find the best combinations for the drawings you are called on to do. It is not enough to pick up a few tricks and use them over and over again.

With the help of the knowledge you will get in this Course, and your honest attempts to put on paper your own thoughts and observations, you will develop your individual style. If you have something interesting and personal to say in your drawings, you will find a personal way to make your pencil say it.

Reproduced same size as original

Lesson **1A** Famous Artists Course

The artist's materials and how to use them — Pencil

Here are the assignments you are to send in

Assignment — TREE (Plate 1)

Copy the pencil drawing of the tree, fence, mailbox, etc. on Plate 1. Work directly within the outlines on the drawing at the right. We've included an extra plate for you to practice on.

Our purpose in having you make this copy is to free you from problems involving drawing and composition and permit you to concentrate fully on how to use the pencil. This plate has been carefully designed to help you demonstrate how well you can control the pencil.

Assignment — LIGHTHOUSE (Plate 1-X)

In pencil, complete the drawing of the lighthouse scene. Draw directly within the printed outlines and shade in the tower, buildings, rocks, trees, sky, etc. as though it were a sunny day. Follow the working procedure shown on pages 12 and 13. Try for a variety of pencil strokes to show the roundness and texture of the forms. Review pages 6 and 7.

In criticizing this assignment, we will be chiefly interested in the variety of strokes and effects you make with your pencil and how well you control the tones of the picture.

Here is the practice work you should do

First read thoroughly and study pages 2 through 15 for an over-all understanding. Combine your study with actual practice. Reading alone is not enough — you must try out your pencil and apply what you study. Practice various strokes similar to those on pages 6 through 8.

Make pencil drawings or sketches of simple objects, especially those on which you can use different stroke patterns to show grass, wood, bark, foliage, etc.

Materials you will need

Three pencils for drawing — HB, 2B and 4B. Some sheets of 11 x 14 white drawing paper.

How much time to spend on these assignments

These assignments for Lesson 1A were designed so you could do them after several evenings of study and practice. We expect you to mail them to us within two weeks after receiving your Course.

It is important for you to get our constructive criticism of your first assignment as soon as possible because it will be of great help to you in getting off to a good start in this Course. Also, it will help you receive the maximum benefit and satisfaction from the lessons and assignments that follow.

We realize you are learning many things that are new to you. Don't let this worry you. Do the best you can and send your assignments in for our helpful criticism. Don't expect your work to be perfect at the start — we don't.

While you're waiting for this work to be criticized and returned to you, go ahead with the student work for Lesson 1B on how to do ink, wash and opaque drawings.

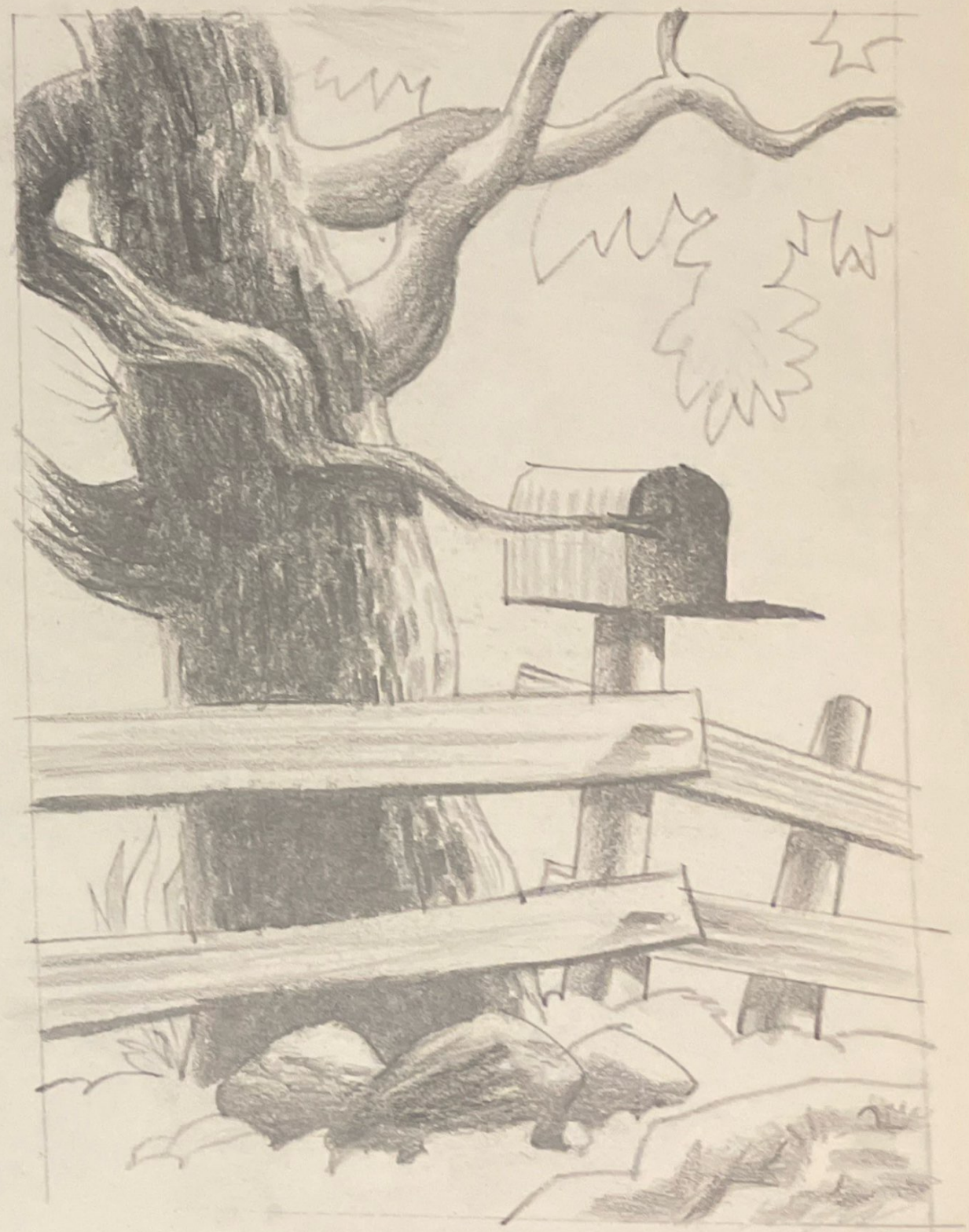
Before mailing

Print your name, address, and student number carefully in the lower left-hand corner of each plate. (Do this with each of the assignments you send in.)

Your lesson carton should contain:

Assignment — TREE (Plate 1)
Assignment — LIGHTHOUSE (Plate 1-X)
1 Return shipping label filled out completely

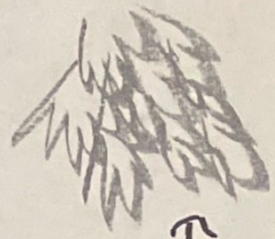
Mail this carton to: **Famous Artists Course**
Westport, Conn.



Pencil

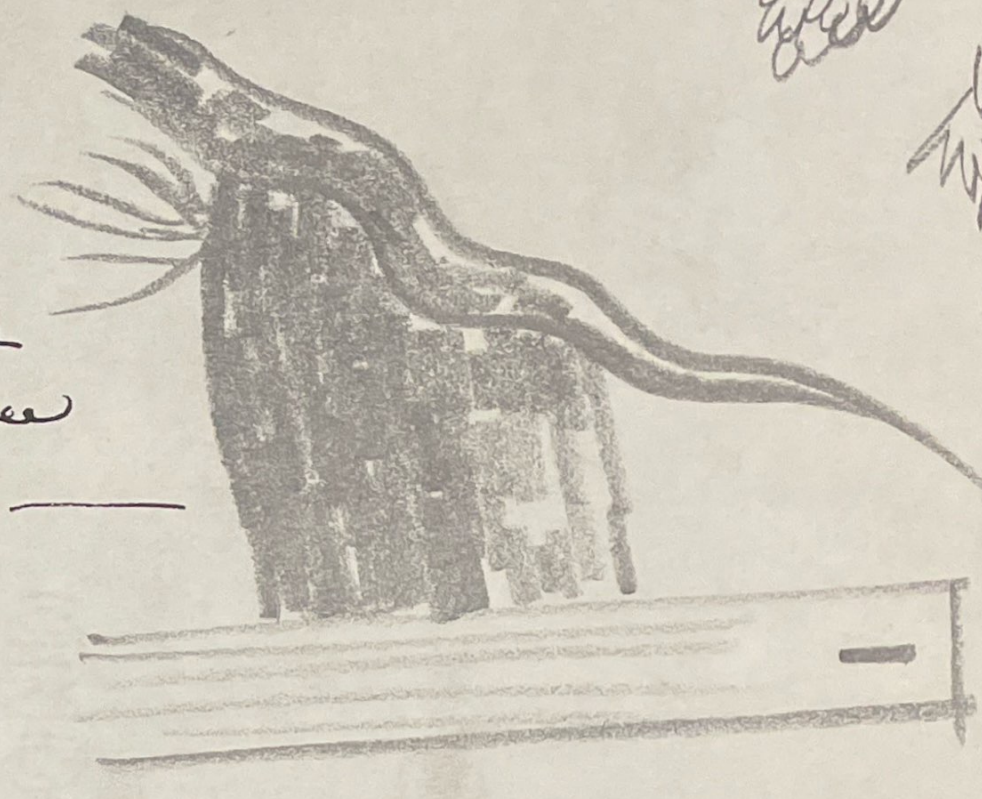
Before you draw, compare the type of pencil strokes that have been used for different objects — fence, tree, grass, etc. Study the length, width and direction of these lines and note the differences in tone.

NOT THIS



THIS

YOUR PENCIL STROKES TOO SMALL USE 3B CHISEL POINT PENCIL TO DRAW CRISP BROAD STROKES



USE A MORE DIRECT & DEFINITE PENCIL STROKE

NOTICE CHARACTER OF LINE IN GRASS THIS IS DRAWN WITH SHARP EDGE OF CHISEL POINT PENCIL

PAUL MACKENDRICK
BOX 35 ROUTE 1
42-1-0227

Pencil

Before you draw, compare the type of pencil strokes that have been used for different objects — fence, tree, grass, etc. Study the length, width and direction of these lines and note the differences in tone.

Pencil

Working directly on this sheet in pencil, make a complete shaded drawing using the outlines as a guide. Follow the working procedure shown on pages 12 and 13.

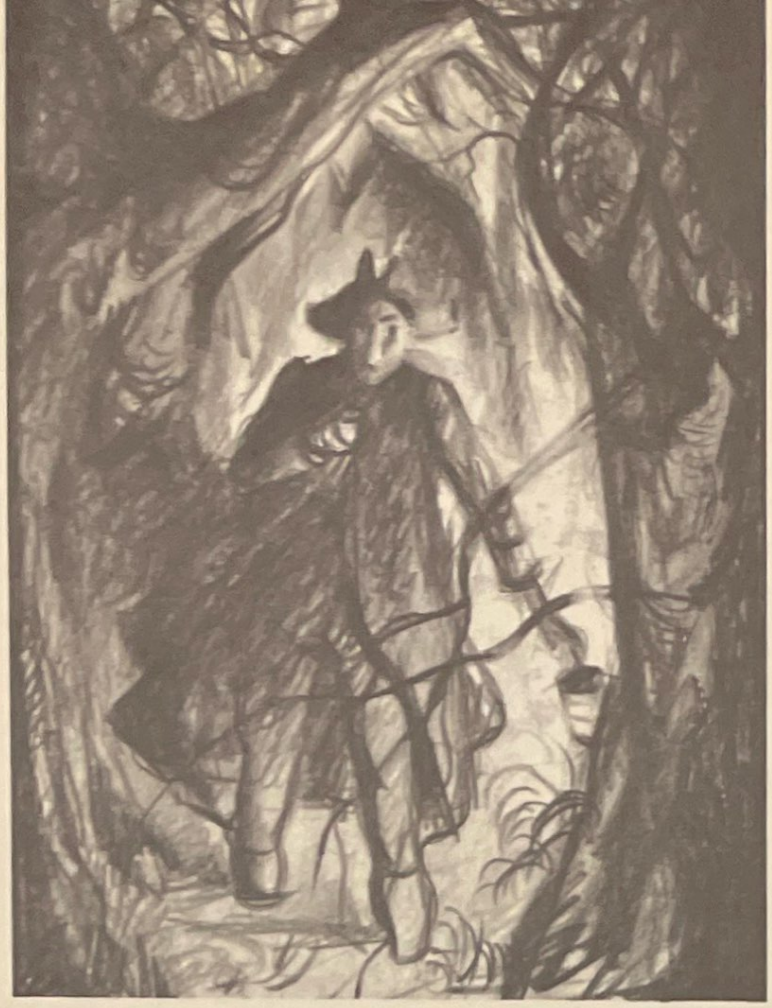
TRY FOR A GREATER VARIETY IN TYPE OF LINE.

YOU COULD USE CHISEL POINT PENCIL HERE

Pencil

Working directly on this sheet in pencil, make a complete shaded drawing using the outlines as a guide. Follow the working procedure shown on pages 12 and 13.

PAUL MACKENDRICK
BOX 35 - ROUTE 1
42-1-0727



Ben Stahl prepared this loose pencil sketch as a "preliminary" for a painting. He worked with a soft pencil and then rubbed the tones with his finger. This gave him the soft, diffused edges we see here.

The loose, sketchy handling of this head by Jon Whitcomb contrasts sharply with the more studied drawing by Al Parker on the facing page. The treatment here is informal and leaves much to the imagination. In order to increase impact, the artist has purposely left out descriptive detail. The drawing was done with a very soft graphite pencil.

This drawing by Robert Fawcett, done on tracing paper with a chisel-point pencil, shows how effectively this tool can be used to create a well-defined pattern of lights and darks. The lines indicating the details and the dark accents were made by turning the chisel point so the sharp edge or point touched the paper.

Both pens and brushes are used in ink drawing. The brushes here are pointed sable water-color brushes, Numbers 3 and 5. For your pen lines you need a crowquill pen with its special holder (the smaller one here), coarse, medium, and fine pens, and a holder for them. The ink should be black, opaque, and waterproof. Three erasers — Artgum, kneaded eraser, and sand eraser — will do your cleanup jobs, and the single-edge razor is useful for removing splattered dots of ink and keeping a slanted point on your sand eraser. A lintless cloth comes in handy as a pen-wiper, and either the thumbtacks or masking tape will fasten your paper securely to your drawing board.

Drawing in ink with pen and brush

Pen or brush and ink drawing has been a favorite with many of the greatest artists in history because of its simple, graphic qualities and many satisfactions. You, too, will find it a direct and fascinating technique.

Most of us enjoy doing a lot with very little. This is certainly what you can learn to do with your pen or brush and ink. The drawings that you make with these tools are called "line drawings." In a line drawing you can make only solid black lines or areas on your white paper — you cannot make grays. But you can make a good substitute for gray tones by putting many fine lines close together to create the effect of gray. The closer your lines, the less white paper shows through between them and the darker your gray looks.

Another satisfaction you'll have will be from the great variety of lines you can create with the pen or brush. As you become more skilled you can draw a smooth line that will look like the soft outline of a girl's cheek, or a rough line that suggests the rugged bark of a tree.

You will also find the same pleasure others do in the actual feel of the pen or the brush. As you move it across the paper you ease the pressure to make a thin line, you press to make it thicker and you vary the movement slightly to give variety and character to your line.

Your skill with the pen or brush will be very important because it is apt to earn you much of your income, especially in the early years of your career. It is with this type of art work that most artists start. Line drawings are in great demand, since they can be reproduced more easily and cheaply than any other kind. They print well on all sorts of paper, especially soft newsprint. They can be reproduced and used successfully where pencil, wash or opaque drawings cannot. The medium is a favorite one for newspaper and all other forms of advertising and printing where economy is important. But it lends itself equally well to making exquisite line drawings for fine books, the highest grades of magazines and deluxe advertising.

There is almost no limit to the number of uses for line drawings, so it will pay you to develop your skill with this medium. Throughout your career, your ability as a line artist will be one of your most valuable assets.

Your materials

For this lesson you will need three pen points — coarse, medium and flexible — a penholder for them, and a crowquill pen and holder and brushes (see page 22). You will also need a bottle of black waterproof drawing ink and a penwiper, which you should use often — any small piece of soft cotton cloth that is free of lint will do. Your paper should have a fairly smooth surface and be hard enough so that your pen will not pick up fibers when you draw. Kid or plate-finish Bristol board or illustration board is good for your finished work. For practice, have plenty of good-quality bond typewriter paper or ledger paper. Accidents will happen occasionally, so have a few blotters handy.

Pens

Pens are classified according to the thickness of line they make. A "coarse" pen makes a broad, thick line. A "medium" pen makes a somewhat thinner line. The word "fine," as applied to a pen, does not refer to its quality; it means that this point makes a thin line. Some pens are "flexible," others are "stiff." If a pen is flexible, a little pressure on it will enable you to make a much broader line. A crowquill pen is especially good for drawing very fine lines.

There are many manufacturers who make excellent pen points. The same type of point is given a different number by each manufacturer, so a chart has been included to help you select pen points similar to the ones mentioned in the lesson. For example, a Gillott 404 is approximately the same point as a Hunt 56, or an Esterbrook 358. It makes very little difference which brand you use: it is what you do with it that counts.

Use a penholder that feels comfortable. Most artists use one that is about as thick as or a little thicker than a pencil. The crowquill pen is quite small and has a special holder.

Comparative chart of pen points

(Approximate relationship)

	Gillott	Esterbrook	Hunt
Coarse	404	358	56
Medium	303	357	22
Fine	170	356	99
Very fine and flexible	290	354	100

Ink

Always use a black ink that is opaque – that is, thick or dark enough to hide or cover the paper completely. If the ink is too thin it will look gray and will not reproduce properly. Blue ink will not reproduce at all. Waterproof ink will not run when you paint a wash over it as described later on in this lesson, under Ink and Wash Technique. The ink can be applied with a pen or brush just as it comes from the bottle. Always keep your ink bottle well corked when not in use or the ink will thicken and not flow easily. If it becomes too thick, thin it with a few drops of water.

Using the pen

Before you use a new pen, dampen it a bit with your lips, then wipe it dry. This will help the point hold the ink and make it flow better from the pen. With a little use a new pen is soon "broken in."

Don't dip your pen too deeply in the ink or you will pick up too much and it may blot and spoil your drawing. Whenever the ink starts to cake on your pen, clean it with your penwiper. Wash your pen points occasionally. Don't handicap yourself with defective or worn-out pen points – throw them away. New ones are cheap and easy to buy.

To draw with your pen, hold it in your fingers in a natural way – just as you would for writing.

Erasures

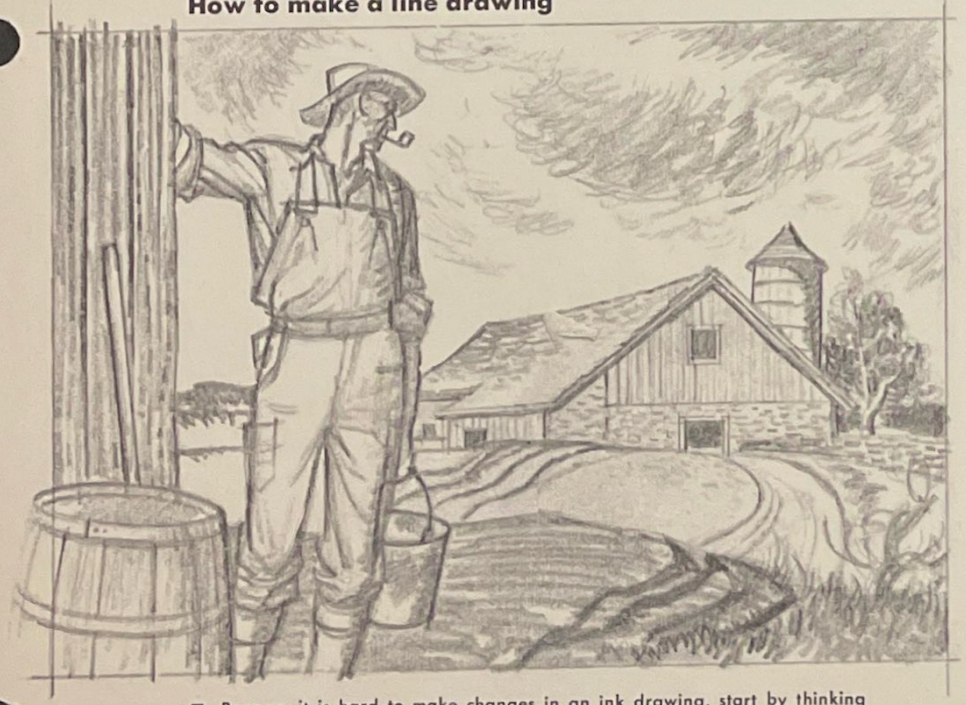
Ink lines can be erased with a sand eraser – a hard eraser similar to the kind used by typists. Keep one end cut to a sharp, slanted point so that you can get into small areas. In using the sand eraser, be very careful not to rub too hard or you will ruin the surface of the paper. Where possible, use a gentle circular motion and always dust the grit off your drawing before putting the pen to the paper again. It is easier to erase on the better grades of paper without spoiling the surface.

Instead of erasing, you can paint out unwanted ink lines with opaque white, which is explained later in this lesson. However, you cannot draw new lines over the opaque white.

When you make a pen and ink drawing, first draw your picture in pencil. Then do your ink drawing right over the lines of your pencil drawing and add textures and tones as needed. When the ink is thoroughly dry, use a piece of Artgum to erase over the entire picture. This will remove all pencil lines and dirt without injuring the pen lines and give you a clean, workmanlike line drawing. (An alternative method of drawing, using tracing paper, is pictured and described below. Here, too, you will have to clean up afterward.)

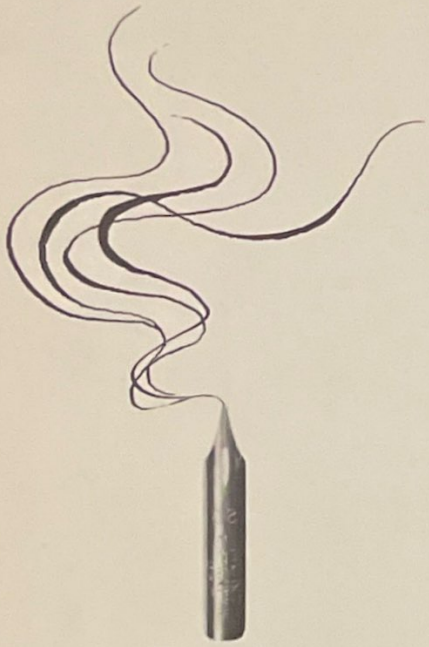
Don't be afraid to make mistakes, because you will make many before you master the pen. Practice a lot with pen and ink so you will gain the skill and assurance necessary for this precise but fascinating and rewarding medium.

How to make a line drawing



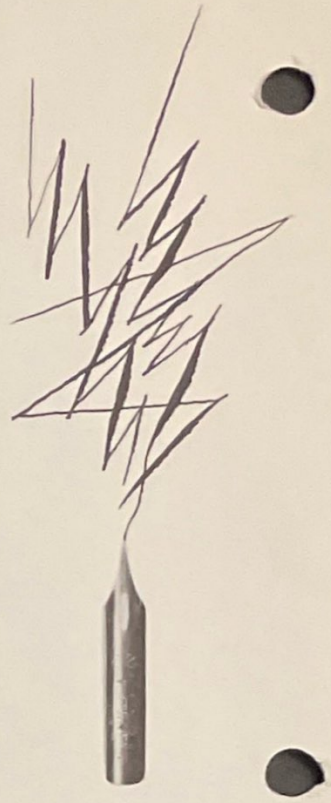
1 Because it is hard to make changes in an ink drawing, start by thinking out your picture in pencil first. Working on tracing paper, establish your forms, light and shade – and, just as important, the type, size, and direction of your lines. Make your drawing complete down to the last detail you will have in your finished picture.

2 Next, turn over your tracing-paper drawing and blacken its other side thoroughly with a soft pencil. Now turn the drawing back and fasten it in place over your Bristol board or illustration board with Scotch tape or thumbtacks. Run a sharp hard pencil over the outlines of the drawing – the pressure will transfer the lines to the board below. With your thinking and drawing accomplished, all that remains is to ink in the picture with pen or brush. This partially finished picture shows you how simple it is to ink in a well-planned pencil drawing.



Use the type of pen line that best expresses the character of the subject you are drawing. Smooth, graceful, curving lines would be appropriate for a peaceful, poetic scene.

Sharp, jagged lines and angles would be right for a harsh, rugged landscape. Notice how dramatic the shapes are compared to the calm lines in the sketch at left.



Experiment with your pens

With different kinds of pen points you can create many varied effects. Here we show you just a few of them. Notice that some of these lines are smooth and clean and others are varied in thickness. Pay particular attention to the length, width and direction of the strokes and the amount of white space between them. The wider the strokes or the smaller the amount of space between them, the darker the effect. When you draw cross-hatched lines, be sure your first set of lines is dry before you cross them with the next set.

Throughout the Course you will be making line drawings. They will give you an opportunity to try out these and many other kinds of lines and effects. In this way you will discover the ones you can use best for each purpose and will develop your own style with the pen. (The effects you see here were made with Gillott pens of the numbers indicated. See the Comparative Chart of Pen Points, page 17.)

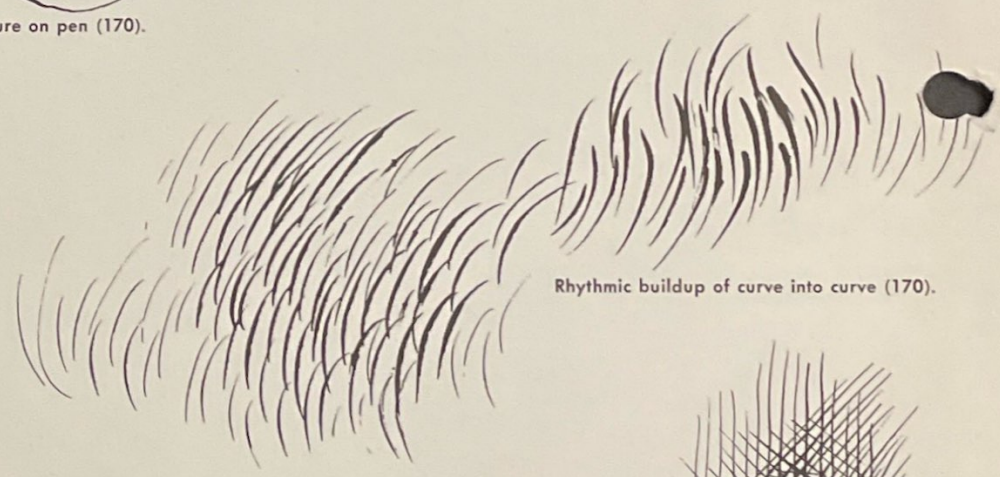
Swirling lines — broken strokes (170).

Each line made up of short strokes (170).

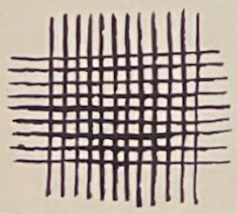
Scrawling motion, as in handwriting (crowquill).

Wavy lines — varied thickness produced by varied pressure on pen (170).

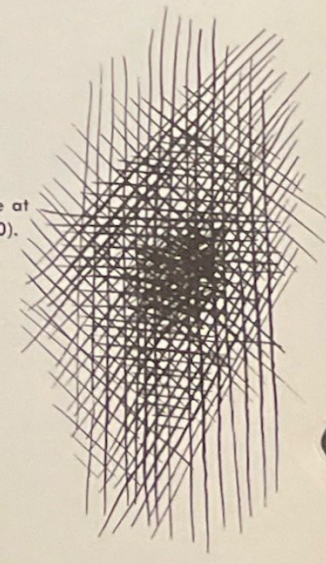
Loops made with scribbling motion (170).



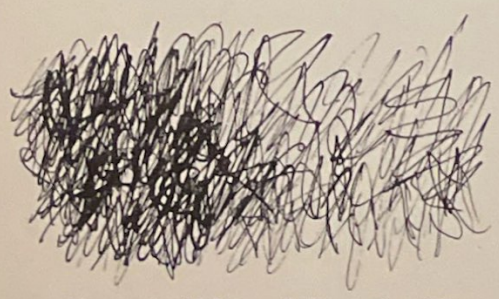
Rhythmic buildup of curve into curve (170).



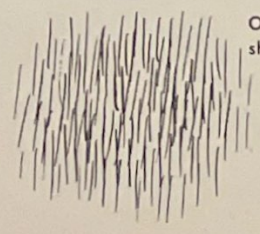
Crosshatching with rigid strokes (404).



Crosshatchings made at different angles (170).

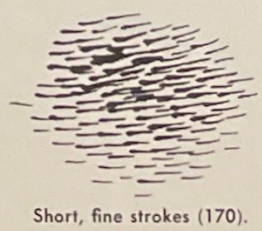


Lines made with free, scribbling motion (170).

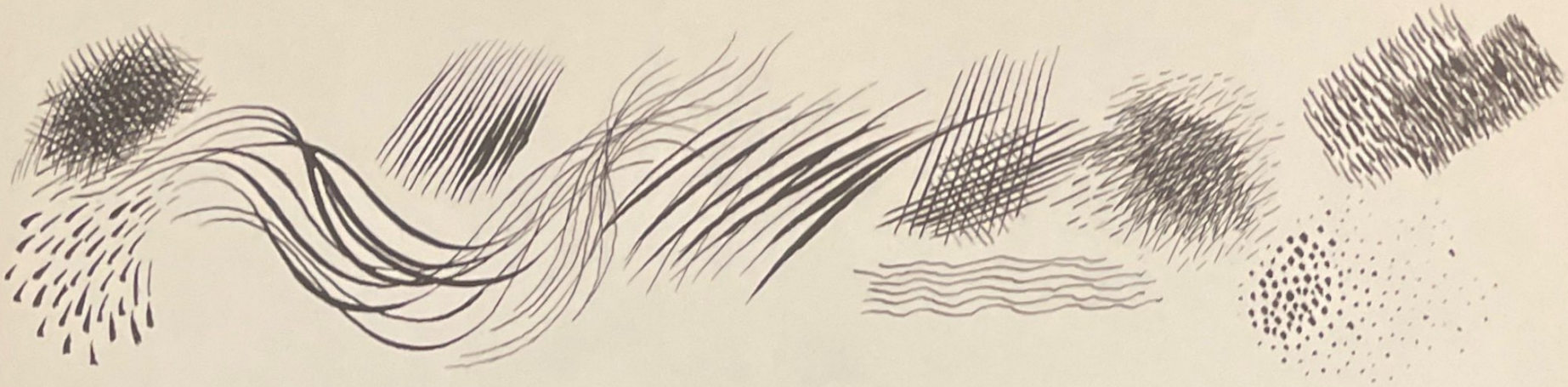


Over-all pattern of short strokes (404).

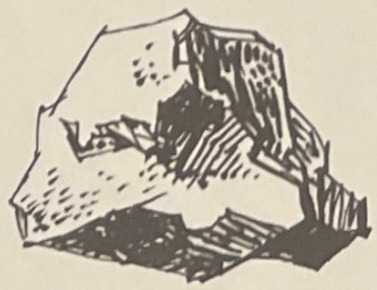
Zigzag lines — changing pressure causes varied width (404).



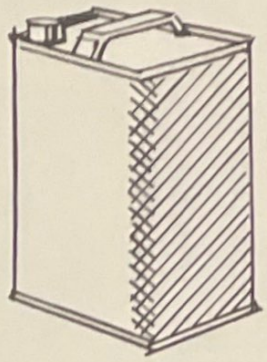
Short, fine strokes (170).



Short pen strokes suggest the soft down covering the chick's body.



This rock is drawn with harsh, jagged lines which are appropriate for the rough form.



Crisp, evenly spaced strokes give the feeling of this hard, smooth metal can.

Rough, choppy strokes suggest coarse bark. Compare the strokes in these four drawings — each subject suggests its own treatment.

Pen techniques

Here are two pen drawings of the same subject — each one different, yet each one effective in its technique. These pictures prove there is no one best way to use the pen. Depending on the subject of your picture, its mood, and its purpose, you should use different techniques. Don't consciously attempt to create a personal style of pen handling. Just as your own style of handwriting developed naturally from much writing, so your own style with the pen will develop from making many line drawings in different techniques. If you simply do your best to make good drawings and good pictures, it should not be long before you find yourself developing a style of your own quite unconsciously.

Many textures with a single tool

This picture, drawn by Albert Dorne for a newspaper advertisement, shows some of the many effects you can obtain with pen and ink.

First of all, notice the wide variety of lines made by the pen, and how the artist has suggested the textures of different things with them. On the boat in front, irregular lines make the texture of rough wood, while clean, hard lines and white space suggest the sleek sides of the modern vessel. For the sky and hills the artist has used parallel straight lines – but on each of these subjects he has made them a bit different.

Dorne has used his lines most economically – he does not draw everything in full detail. With just a few lines he clearly says "clouds" – with a few more, "water." A few well-placed lines beyond the big ship are enough to make us see an entire town. Throughout his picture he suggests a lot with a little.

Examine the patches lifted out of this picture and see how the pen strokes (and the white of the paper) are used. The drawing and the patches are reproduced in their actual size.

Thin, even, parallel lines give sky tone.

A few lines, thoughtfully chosen, suggest an entire town.

Blacks and deep shadows are put in with a brush.

Courtesy Irving Trust Co.

Rhythmic, flowing pen strokes give movement and reflection to the water.

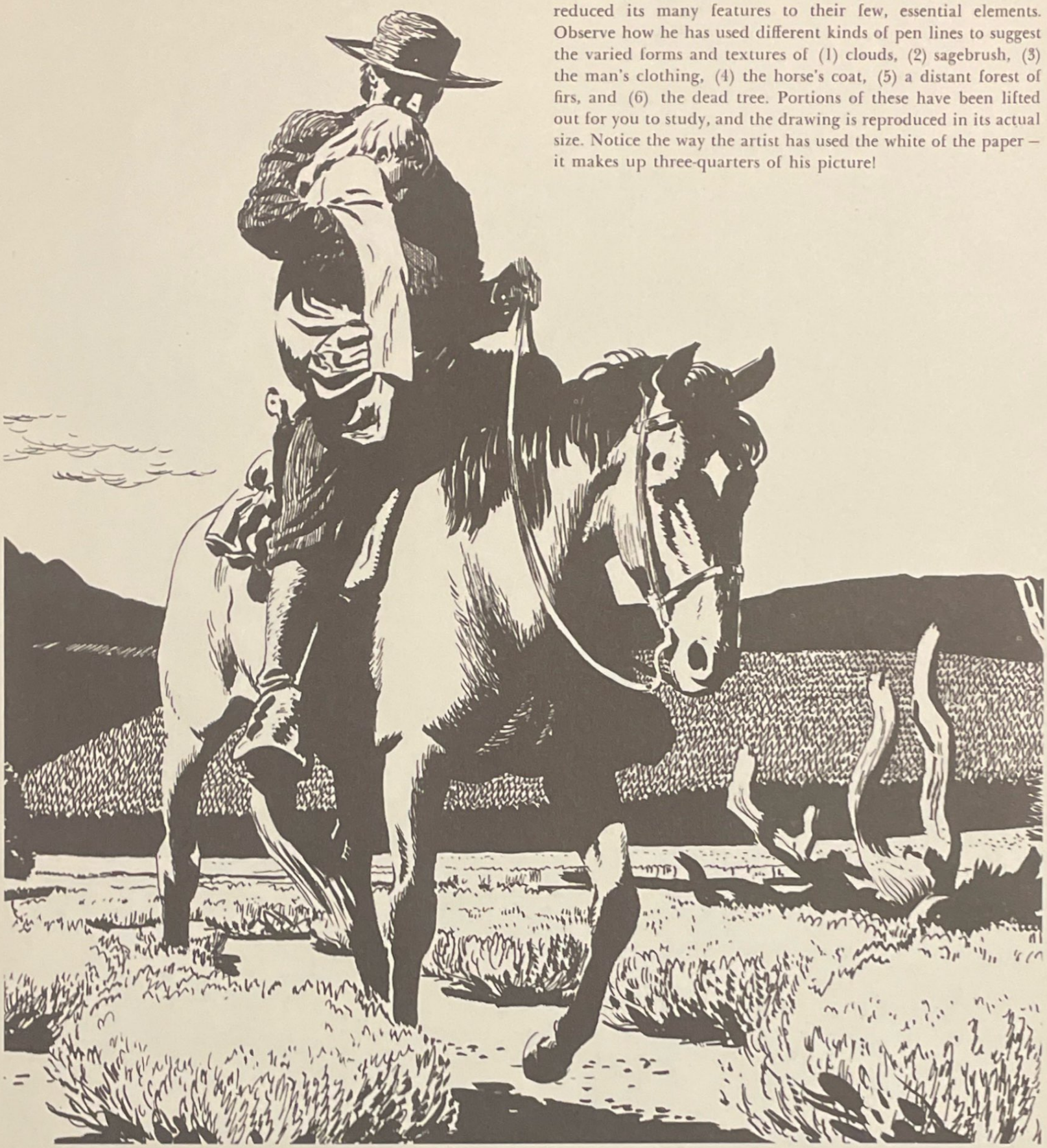
Coarse, irregular pen strokes create the grain of the wood.

The light parts here and elsewhere are the white paper.

Reproduced same size as original

A well-planned line drawing

Here Fred Ludekens has taken a large, complex scene and reduced its many features to their few, essential elements. Observe how he has used different kinds of pen lines to suggest the varied forms and textures of (1) clouds, (2) sagebrush, (3) the man's clothing, (4) the horse's coat, (5) a distant forest of firs, and (6) the dead tree. Portions of these have been lifted out for you to study, and the drawing is reproduced in its actual size. Notice the way the artist has used the white of the paper – it makes up three-quarters of his picture!



Delicate, irregular lines suggest the underpart of the light, fleecy clouds.

Short, curving strokes suggest the detail and texture of the sagebrush.

Irregular pen lines, unevenly spaced, represent the soft texture of the man's trouser.

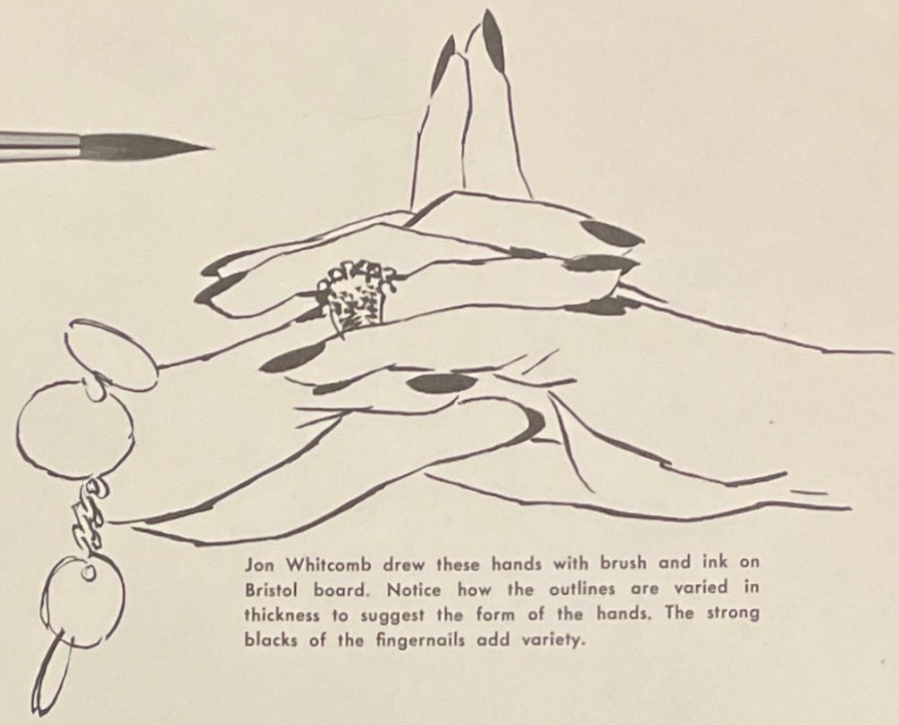
The lines suggesting the texture of the horse's coat follow the contour of its body.

Short up-and-down strokes represent the tops of the more distant pines.

Shadows are solid blacks put in with a brush.

Reproduced same size as original

The artist's materials and how to use them



Jon Whitcomb drew these hands with brush and ink on Bristol board. Notice how the outlines are varied in thickness to suggest the form of the hands. The strong blacks of the fingernails add variety.

Drawing with brush and ink

You will enjoy working with your pencil and pen – but not more than you will with your brush, once you discover the wonderful things you can do with it. The brush is so soft and flexible that it answers to the slightest pressure. With it, you can draw any kind of line you want, from the lightest hairline to wide, heavy strokes.

Fine, graceful, flowing lines can be made almost effortlessly with your brush. If your picture calls for large areas of darks, your brush will put them in solidly and effectively. It can make drawings that only an expert can tell from pen drawings. Brush and ink pictures can be reproduced just as easily and economically as pen and ink drawings, too.

By all means, learn to draw with both the pen and the brush. You can use a combination of these tools in the same picture.

Your materials

Brushes come in a great variety of sizes, shapes and materials. The smallest brush is an 000. As the numbers increase, the brushes get bigger and thicker. Numbers 2, 3, 4 and 5 are excellent all-around sizes for line drawings. They hold more ink than the smallest brushes and yet can make a line almost as fine as an 000. (Too fine a line will not reproduce well.)

The best brushes for line drawing are pointed sable watercolor brushes. It pays to buy good ones – you can get better effects with them and they last much longer.

Paper and ink. Papers that will do for pen and ink will do for brush and ink. A paper with a kid or slightly rough finish is preferred. It will hold or take more ink and therefore give you a richer line than a smooth surface. The brush can be used on a softer paper, where the pen would pick up the fibers and create rough lines or make a blot.

Black waterproof drawing ink – the same kind you use with your pen – is ideal for brush work. To make erasures or corrections, use the same materials and techniques we recommend for pen and ink.

Using the brush

Follow the same procedure as with pen and ink. First lightly trace the lines of your preliminary sketch on your paper and then start inking over them with a brush. As in pen and ink, don't just go over the pencil lines with your brush. Use your brush to develop the lines and give them character.

After dipping your brush into the ink, always press it gently against the inside edge of the bottle neck to remove excess ink. Before touching the brush to your drawing, try it on a piece of scrap drawing paper. A piece about 4 x 12 inches, tacked to your drawing board, will be very convenient.

Robert Fawcett drew this weather-beaten ship's figurehead with brush and ink on medium-smooth illustration board. Observe how he varied his brush strokes to suggest the textures of wood and sand. Notice, too, the strong pattern of light and shadow created on the figure by crosshatched brush strokes and black areas.

You should hold your brush in the same easy, normal way you hold the pencil or pen. Hold it lightly, for the brush is a very sensitive, responsive tool.

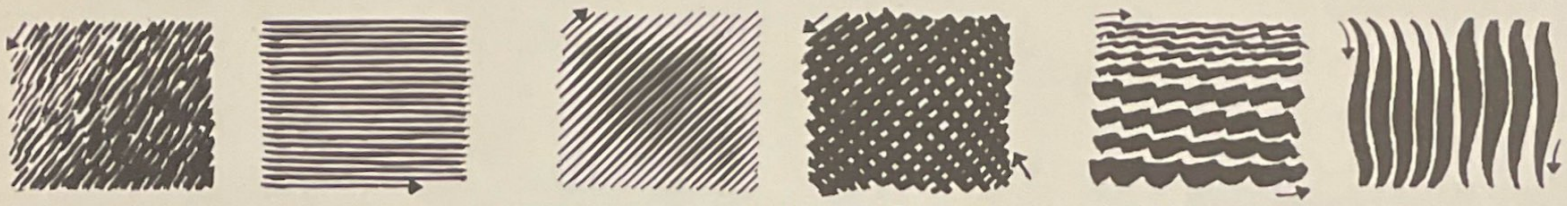
Never let ink dry in your brush. When you are through drawing, wash the brush by gently rubbing it on a cake of soap until you have a lather, then rub it in the palm of your hand. Repeat this operation several times until the ink is removed. Rinse the brush in clear water, flip it to remove any excess water, shape the point carefully between your fingers and then put the brush away to dry.

Ink is very hard on brushes, but if you clean them thoroughly they will last a long time.

Press lightly for this line.

A little harder to vary the line.

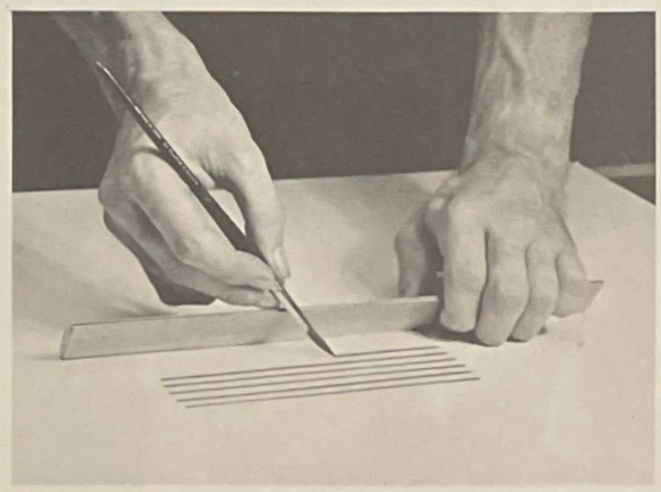
Press hard and you get the full width of the brush.



Here are a few examples of the wide variety of lines and effects you can create with a brush.

Courtesy Good Housekeeping

Al Parker drew all of the lines in these pictures with just a single brush. They range from thin, regular strokes to heavy ones of varying thickness. He painted in the solid blacks with the same brush.



You can make straight, accurate lines with a brush and a ruler using the method shown here. The ferrule (metal band holding the hairs) of your brush rides along the edge of the ruler, and the thickness of line varies with the pressure on the brush. It will take practice, but eventually you will be able to rule lines with remarkable precision.

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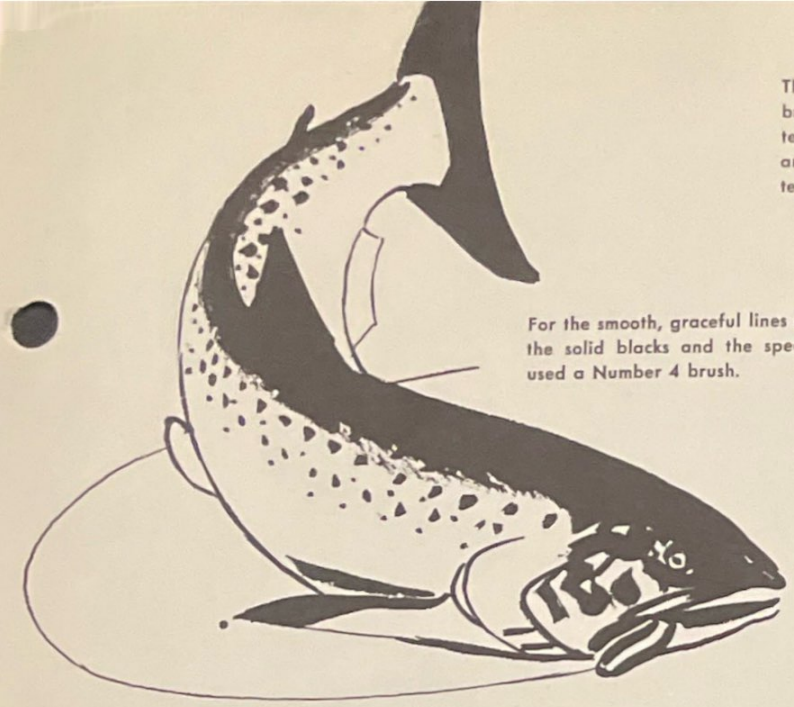
This is a portion of an illustration by Fred Ludekens, done on fairly smooth illustration board. He used large areas of solid black painted with a brush to create a bold, dramatic effect. The gray or middle tones he built up with fine pen lines.

This picture by Robert Fawcett shows the fine results that can be obtained with a brush used in a broad, free manner.

In this drawing we see how a few simple pen lines can be used to suggest many subtle differences in shape and texture. Fred Ludekens has made the hard, clean lines of the fence boards contrast with the wrinkled lines in the figures' clothing. A few solid blacks, made with a brush, add variety to his careful line drawing.



For the smooth, graceful lines of the fish, as well as the solid blacks and the speckles, Fred Ludekens used a Number 4 brush.

This eye-catching drawing by Albert Dorne was done entirely with brush and ink. Notice how the brush has been used to suggest the textures of the dog's fur, the girl's hair and blouse. The solid black areas of different sizes and shapes provide a strong contrast to these textures and the white paper.

Pen and brush drawings

All of the drawings on these two pages were done in ink — some with pen, some with brush, and some with a combination of both. They show a wide variety of treatment, ranging from sensitive, simple outlines to bold light-and-dark effects. The technique varies in each case according to what the artist felt was appropriate to his subject. All of these pictures are reproduced the same size they were drawn.

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This is a detail of an illustration by Albert Dorne. It is reproduced actual size to show you the many different kinds of lines he drew with a Number 4 brush. Study the lines in terms of their direction, distance from one another, and thickness — particularly the way some of them vary from thin to thick. Note, also, how few lines the artist drew in the face of the girl on the right. Only in the large head of the man did he use many lines. Beginning artists often put too many lines in small drawings of heads. Keep yours simple.

To draw in wash, you need a tube of water-color lampblack and a bowl of water. You mix your lampblack and water in a plate or other palette — the nest of individual palettes shown here is especially useful for preparing different tones. The blotters (under the palettes) may be used to lift excess wash from your drawing and to lighten tones; the cloth, and the blotters, too, are used for drying your brushes. The same brushes with which you draw in ink — Numbers 3 and 5 are pictured here — will do for wash, provided you clean them well. A flat sable brush is handy for moistening your drawing surface. The masking tape does two jobs for you — it fastens your paper to your drawing board and keeps your picture margins clean.

Wash drawing

If you have never worked with this exciting and sometimes frustrating medium you have a thrilling adventure ahead of you. Artists who have had experience with wash drawing are warm in their praise of this medium, which can be used in so many ways to create so many different effects.

Wash drawing has a full range of values, from solid black to the white of the paper, and you can control it to give any effect you desire, exactly as in water-color painting. You can use wash for every degree of finished drawing, from flat, decorative effects to three-dimensional realism that is hard to distinguish from a photograph. On the other hand, it is a fluid, spontaneous medium — the wash flows freely as you work with it, and suggests ways to create pleasing and exciting effects. You don't have to wait long for it to dry, either.

The fluid and rapid-drying qualities of wash make it possible to work fast — and this makes wash a favorite choice of many artists when they have to do a tone drawing. It is especially fine for quickly covering large areas such as a sky or a background in a picture.

Wash reproduces well. When handled simply and in flat tones, it can be reproduced on all but the poorest newsprint. When handled in its full range of tones, it is excellent for reproduction in the finest publications.

It will take a lot of practice and experimenting before you will know how to make a good wash drawing. It won't be easy, so don't be too critical of yourself if your first results don't come off the way you think they should. Remember, once you have mastered wash, you will like the ease and speed with which it works, and the rich tonal effects you can produce with it. Patient effort is the clue to success here.

What is wash?

Wash is made by mixing a black pigment with water. It is applied to white paper. The lightness of a tone depends upon how much of the white of the paper shows through the wash. This is controlled by the amount of water mixed with the pigment — (1) much water for light tones, (2) less water for medium tones, (3) very little water for dark tones, and (4) almost pure pigment for solid black.

Your materials

The materials you need for wash drawing are very simple — a tube of water-color lampblack, several round sable brushes, a flat sable brush, illustration or Bristol board, a porcelain palette or plate, a large bowl of clean water, a wad of cotton, a blotter and a paint rag.

Water-color lampblack in a tube is the only pigment you need for wash drawing. Other blacks such as ivory black, gamma black, and illustrators' black also can be used. Most artists prefer lampblack. (On page 40 we'll tell you about opaque white and opaque gray, which you can use to touch up mistakes and put in high lights.)

Brushes. Your most useful brush will be a round sable. It will be good to have Numbers 3 and 5. For large wash drawings you will find it convenient to have one or two even larger ones. Change your brush to fit your need. The general rule is — large brushes for large areas, and small brushes for little areas, details and fine lines.

For putting in large, flat areas of wash, as well as for moistening areas with pure water before painting, a flat sable brush is

best. One 3/8 or 1/2 inch wide will meet most of your needs.

It will pay you to buy good brushes and take good care of them by thoroughly but gently washing them when you are through painting.

Paper or illustration board. Your choice of paper is extremely important because of the major role it plays in wash drawing. One kind of surface will take the wash one way while others will give different effects. Experiment with various textures to learn what you can do with each.

If you put a wash on paper, it will "buckle" or wrinkle. That is why you should work on illustration board – a paper that has a heavy cardboard base that keeps it stiff. It comes in three general surfaces – smooth, medium and coarse – sometimes called "hot pressed," "cold pressed" and "rough." Use inexpensive illustration board for your practice work. Although it costs more than paper it is well worth it because the surface stays flat and the wash flows on smoothly and easily.

Palette. A white porcelain butcher's tray is a favorite palette with many artists. Some also use regular white china plates or saucers. Also available are nests of small individual palettes. You can mix a different tone in each. They stack on top of each other to save space – and also to save the mixtures of wash. You can try various types of sectional palettes, too.

How to make a wash drawing

As with pen and ink, first lightly draw with an H, HB or B pencil on your illustration board the outlines of your picture. Remove any excess lead from the drawing by very gently rubbing your kneaded eraser over it.

Now, moisten the illustration board by going over the surface several times with your cotton wad or flat sable brush full of water. Let the board dry thoroughly – you should see no water when you hold the board so that light reflects from the surface. Right before putting in a tone, it is good to moisten once again the precise area to be covered, using a cotton wad or a large brush with clean water. Only practice will teach you how moist the surface must be for different effects.

Mix your washes in your palette, as shown in the picture on the facing page. Always mix more tone than you think you will need, for while painting an area you cannot stop to mix more wash thoroughly so that the tone will be even.

Use as large a brush as you can in the area you are painting. With a large brush, more work can be done without loading up again with wash. With too small a brush, the wash area will dry before you can cover it up, and repeated applications of tone will fill it with streaks and sharp, dark edges.

To load your brush, dip it into the wash until it is full. Then gently press the brush on one side of your palette so that about one drop of wash comes out. This will usually leave your brush "just right" and full enough for painting.

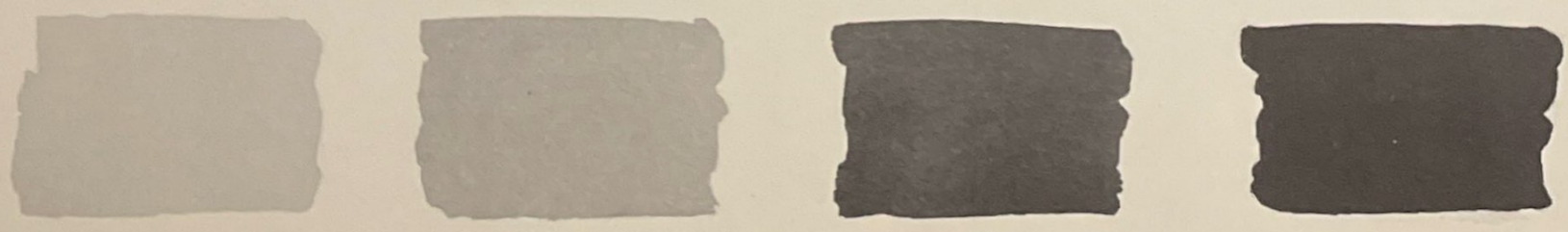
Clean your brush in your water bowl. Refill it often with clean water. The larger the bowl the less frequently you will have to change the water.

Never try to paint a wash with a brush that is too dry. Before starting to paint, it is a good idea to tack, in a corner of your drawing board, a strip of drawing paper about 4 x 12 inches. This is helpful for testing tones and for making trial strokes before actually putting your brush to the drawing. If you can get the correct value of light or dark with one wash in an area, your drawing will have a freshness not possible when you use several washes, laid one over the other, to get the right shade.

Three basic qualities of wash

These two pictures of the development of a simple wash drawing show you three features of the medium: (1) It is transparent, (2) it blends naturally from one moist tone to another, and (3) tones are built up from light to dark. Here the pencil lines show through the first coat of light wash. The sky has been blended from dark at the top to light at the horizon by adding water to the wash.

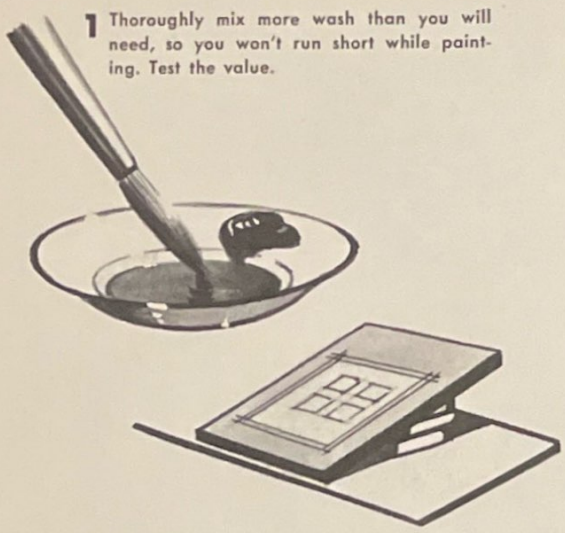
Now the shadow on the end of the house has been built up by painting a second coat of wash over the first when dry. The roof and ground were painted in the same way with a much darker coat of wash.



You can control the value (lightness or darkness) of a wash by the amount of pigment you mix with the water. Add pigment to darken tones, add water to lighten them.

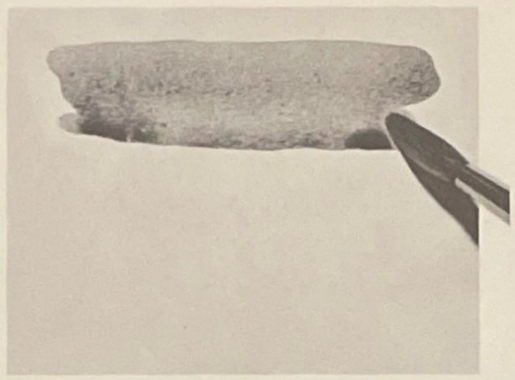
Painting a flat wash

Frequently, in a picture, you will need to paint a smooth, flat tone, all of one shade or value. Begin by moistening your paper with clean water, using a brush or piece of cotton. When the paper has absorbed the water until none of it shows on the surface, you can proceed as shown. Once you've started, keep working steadily – don't stop and don't work back into the painted area even though it looks uneven. When dry, it should be smooth and flat. Naturally, your results will improve with practice.

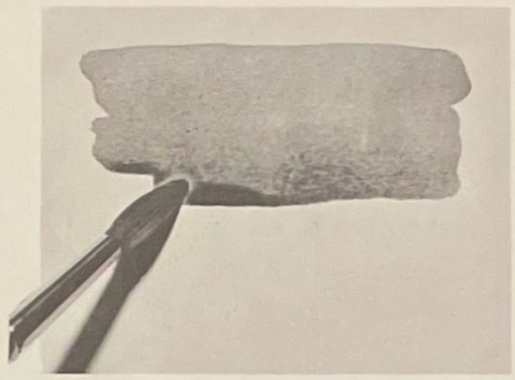


1 Thoroughly mix more wash than you will need, so you won't run short while painting. Test the value.

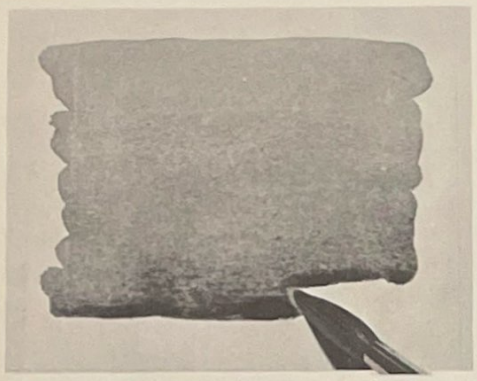
2 Tilt board slightly so you can guide wash gradually from top to bottom.



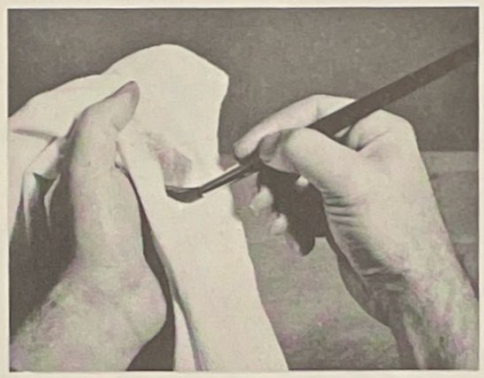
3 With brush full of wash, start puddle across top and begin at once to guide it down paper with smooth back-and-forth movement.



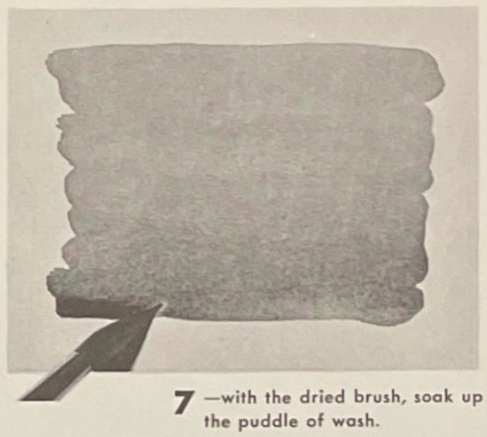
4 Reload brush as often as necessary to keep a puddle at all times. If puddle is too small, paper may dry, causing streaked tone; if too large, it will run down paper.



5 Continue back-and-forth motion, gradually and steadily floating wash down paper. Never work back into finished area while it is damp.



6 When you get to bottom you will have a puddle – so dry brush quickly on rag and –

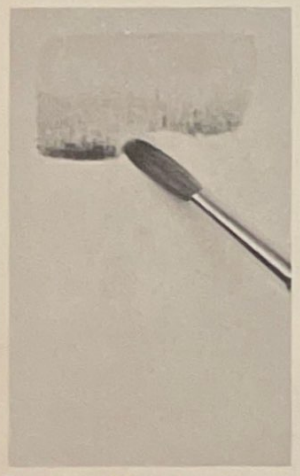


7 –with the dried brush, soak up the puddle of wash.

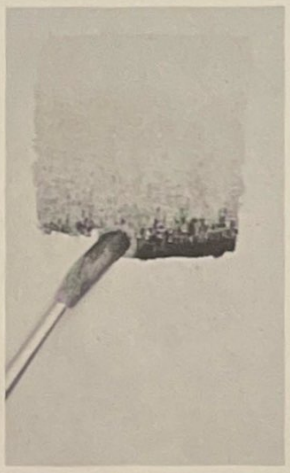
Painting a graded wash

One of the fine things about wash is the ease with which you can blend a tone from light to dark or from dark to light. A wash blended this way is known as a graded wash. There are two basic ways of painting these graded washes: (1) Working from light to dark and (2) working from dark to light. Before starting a graded wash, moisten your paper with clean water and tilt your board as for laying a flat wash.

Light to dark



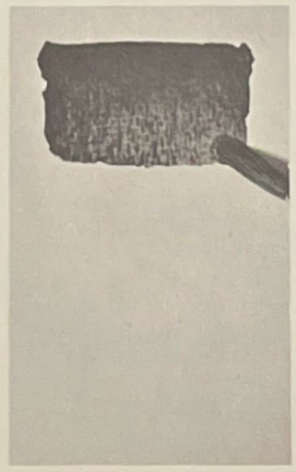
1 Make puddle (not deep) of light gray wash across top of paper. Work it slowly down the paper with a back-and-forth movement.



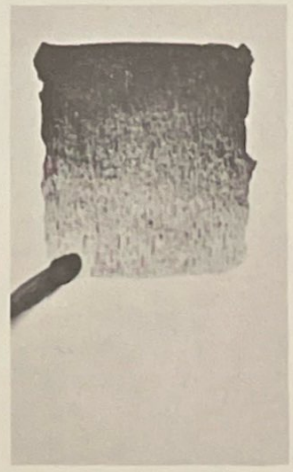
2 Add a little darker wash to puddle and keep floating it down paper. It will blend with lighter wash. Further down, add some darker wash.

3 At bottom, wash should be as dark as planned. Dry brush on rag and pick up remaining puddle. Don't paint back into wet area!

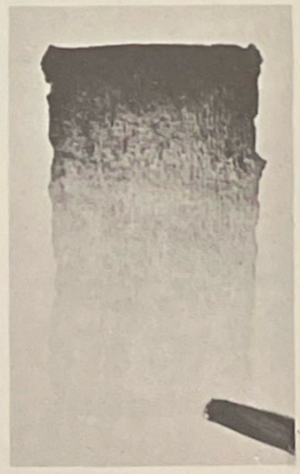
Dark to light



1 Start with puddle of dark tone and begin working it back and forth down paper.



2 Add small amount of lighter wash to puddle. It will blend with darker value. Keep wash wet and moving.

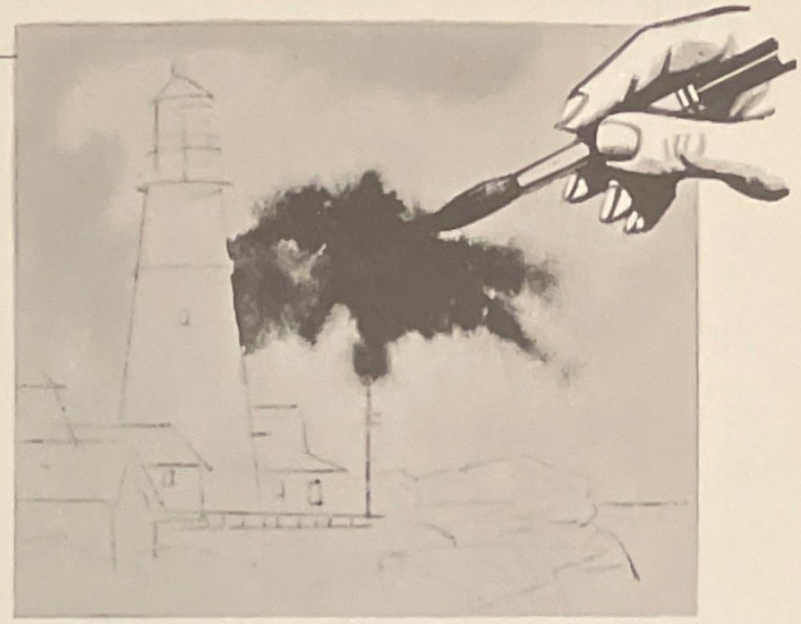


3 Add water as you work down paper. Keep a puddle. At bottom, pick up remainder of puddle with dry brush.

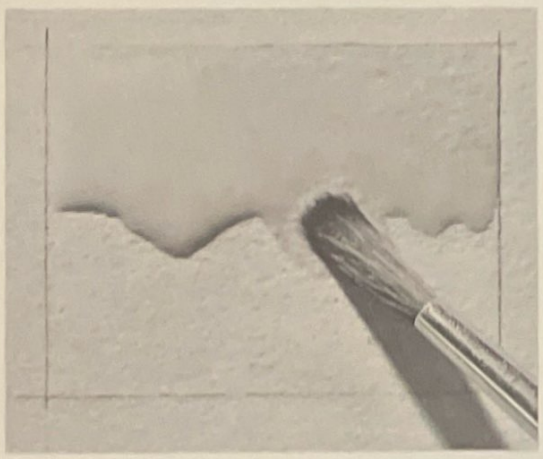
Indefinite blending or "wet-in-wet" technique

In indefinite blending, you first float clear water or a wash over the entire area to be painted. Then into this wet area you paint one or more darker tones. These "bleed" or blend themselves out into the wet surface and produce an "indefinite blend" or "wet-in-wet" effect.

Many interesting effects and textures are produced by indefinite blending. This technique is especially useful for creating soft blended edges — as on fleecy clouds, fur, or water. Be sure, however, that the tone you add to a wet area is much darker than you intend the final effect to be, because this tone will lighten considerably as it blends with the water or wash already on the paper.

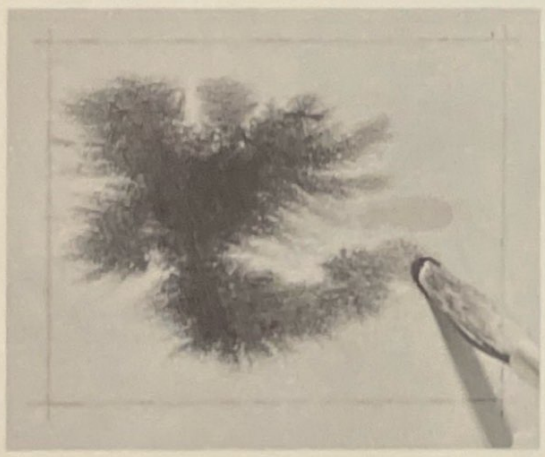


1 First cover the entire area to be painted — in this case it is the sky — with pure water. Then paint into this area the various tones you desire and allow them to creep out and blend into the wet surface.



1

Having mixed your wash, wet the entire area with pure water. Make sure you leave no dry spots, because streaks and hard lines will form on them when you apply a tone of wash to the paper.



2

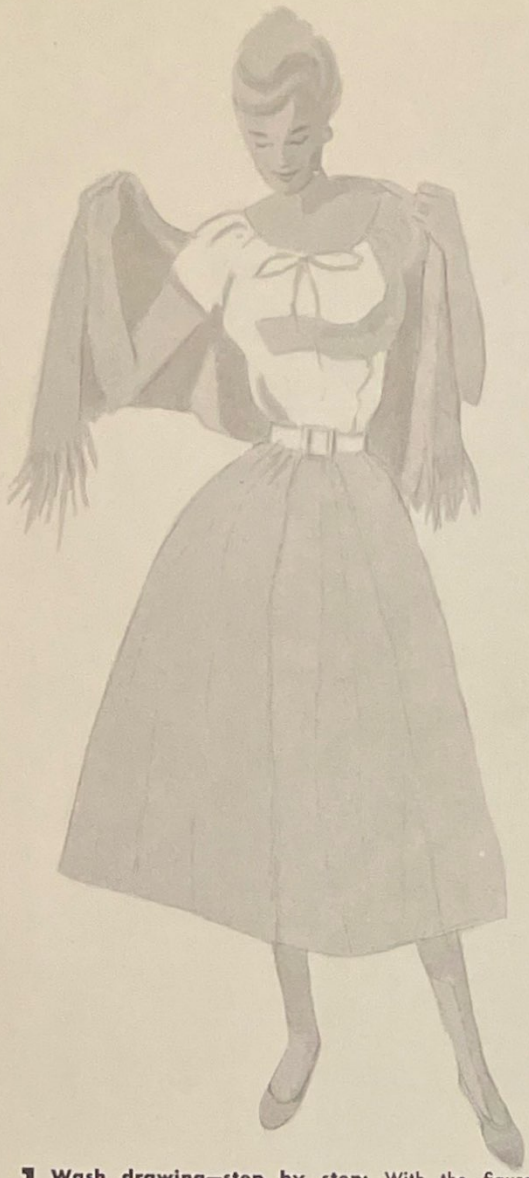
Paint into the wet area with the wash. It will "creep" out into the wet area, making interesting effects whose general shape and value you can control. (The wet surface will thin your wash, so always mix it much darker than you intend it to appear.)

3

Add darker tone to the first wash quickly — while it is still wet. If it starts to dry, stop and let the whole area dry completely. Then wet it again and continue adding tone.

2 Continue as before, until the sky has the value you want. Then paint in your other grays — the shadow side of the lighthouse, rocks, buildings, etc. Build up the darker grays, allowing each tone to dry before painting over it.

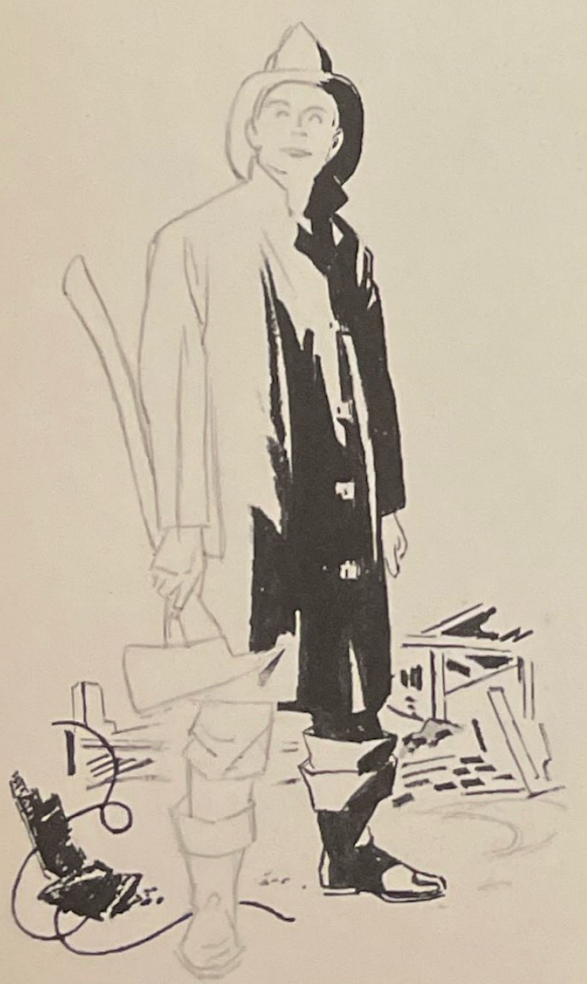
3 Carry the drawing as far as you can with these washes, then put in the deepest tones. With opaque white and opaque grays (described later), put in your high lights. You can correct mistakes with opaque color matching the tone to be corrected.



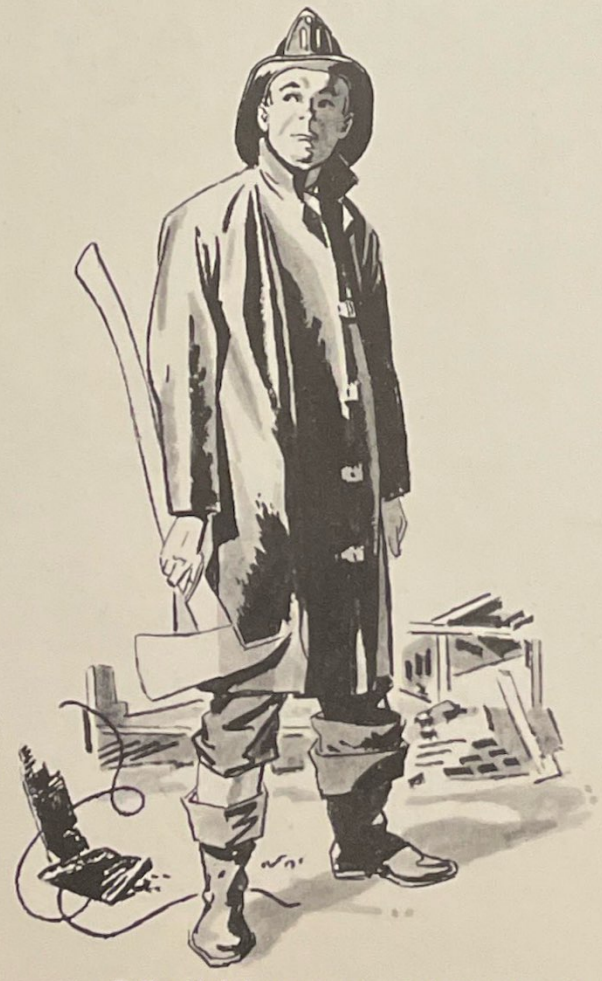
1 **Wash drawing—step by step:** With the figure carefully penciled, simple flat values are painted in. Notice that some areas are left bare — the white of the paper will be used for much of the blouse.

2 Next, the darker values are built up to give a feeling of light and shade and show the form of the skirt. Be sure to let each wash dry before applying the next.

3 Here the solid blacks have been added and the small details finished. Opaque white and grays can be used for high lights and minor corrections when necessary.



1 **Ink and wash technique:** Over a pencil drawing, the black lines and solid blacks are put in with waterproof ink to establish the shadow pattern on the figure. Darkest darks in background are indicated.



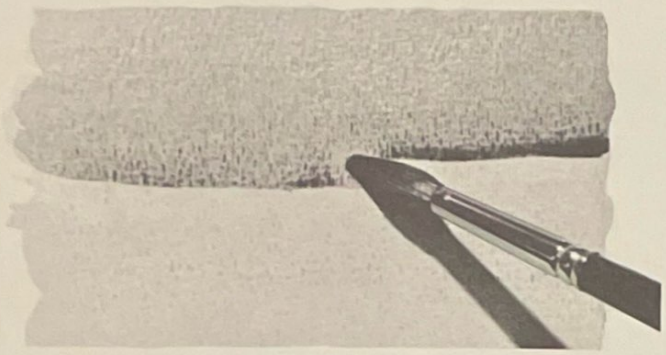
2 The black lines are now completed and washes of medium value have been added after the ink is dry. The areas which will be lighted in the final drawing are left as white paper.

3 Darker grays are put in and details finished. Opaque white has been used to highlight the eye and coat buckles, and to separate the axhead from the coat.

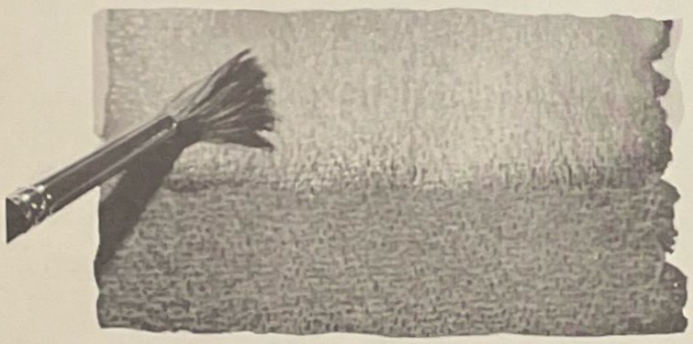
Helpful suggestions

At first, wash may seem hard and strange to you. But if you apply the suggestions we give you here, and if you experiment and practice enough, it will soon become easier, and you will find it one of the most useful mediums.

On the next few pages we give you detailed, step-by-step demonstrations of different ways of making wash drawings. We do not expect you to master all of these methods right here and now. This lesson is actually a basic handbook of art materials and methods, and you should turn back to it for reference, study and review all through your Course. Don't forget, you learn to draw by drawing – and that is also how you will learn to make good wash drawings.



1 Wash dries lighter than it looks when wet — sometimes lighter than you want it. You can darken a wash by floating another wash over it. Be sure to wait until the first wash is completely dry before you apply the second. To avoid making streaks, use the tip of the brush and very little pressure.



2 Sometimes the wash will dry darker than you intended. Go over it with a brush full of clean water. Then, pick up the water with a clean, dry brush. You can do this several times, until the area is as light as you want it. If your wash is much too dark, you can press a blotter on while it is still wet.

3 As a rule it is better to leave the paper bare where you wish white areas in your picture. However, for very small details or minor corrections it is often easier to use opaque white or grays.

4 It is hard to keep your margins clean and even when you are making a wash drawing. Often it is easier to work freely — and then clean up the edges of your finished picture with opaque white. To give your picture a straight, even border, hold the top edge of your ruler up from the paper and run the ferrule of your brush along this edge.

5 Another method of keeping borders of your drawing clean is to frame your picture with masking tape before you begin to paint. Don't worry if the washes run over the tape. When the painting is dry, carefully remove the tape by pulling it slowly in a diagonal direction away from the picture edge. Professionals prefer this method.

Common faults

Streak in flat wash tone

Cause: Attempting to match a partly dry tone with a new mixture.

Cure: Be sure to mix more wash than you will need to cover an area — and don't stop painting until it is covered.

Unwanted "bleeding" along edges of tones

Cause: Painting a second wash tone while the first is still partly damp.

Cure: If you want a clean edge, be sure your first wash is completely dry before you paint in a second.

Splotches or unwanted irregularities

Cause: Dirt or fingerprints on paper or illustration board.

Cure: Erase any dirt on your paper and mop the surface gently with a wet cotton wad or brush. Then let the surface dry. Moisten it again before painting.

Unwanted streaks in wash tones

Cause: Not enough mixing, so that there is pigment on the brush — or painting with too small a brush.

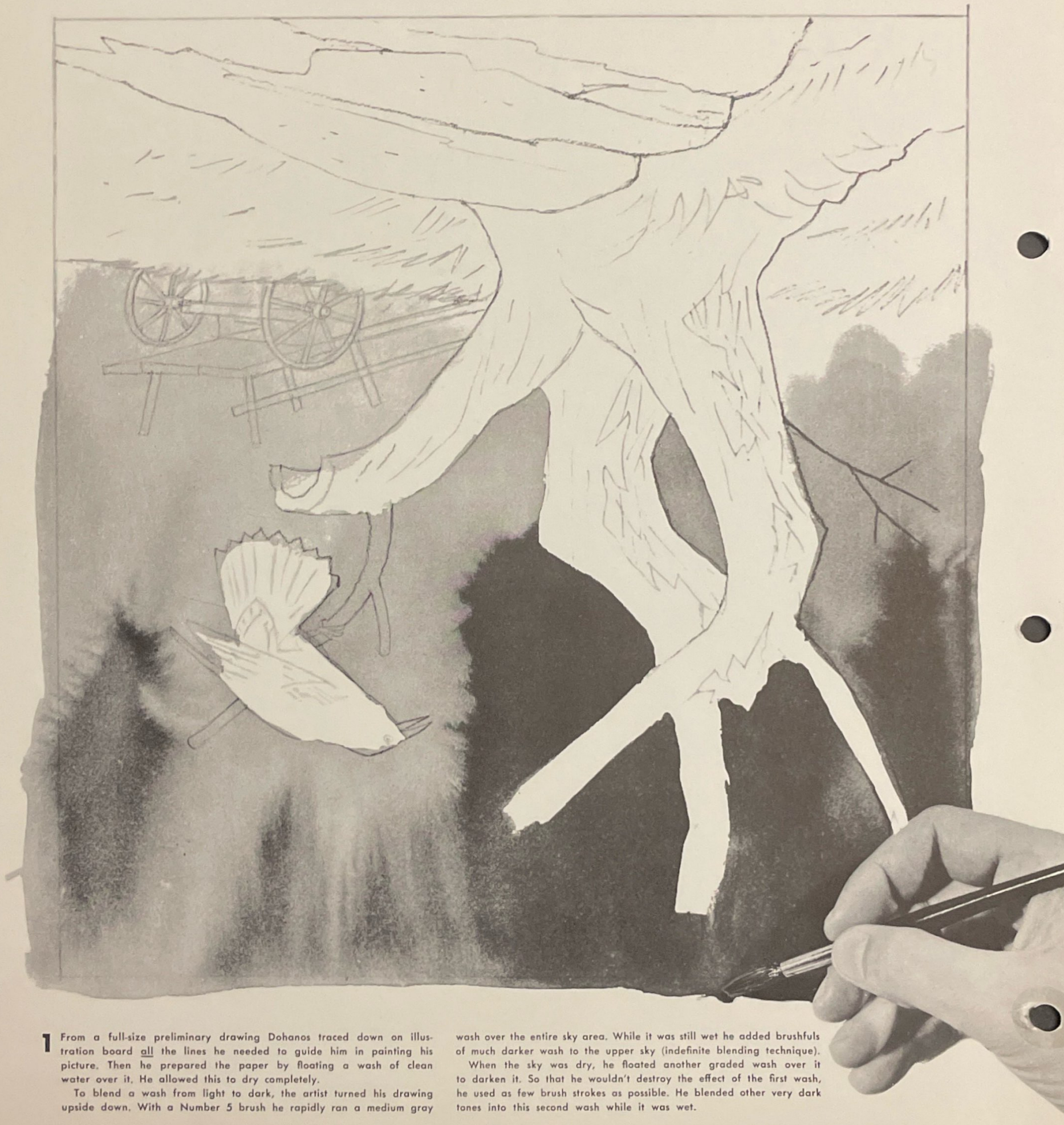
Cure: Stir your mixture thoroughly to get all pigment dissolved. Use the largest brush convenient for the area you are painting.

The preliminary sketch, showing the tones for the wash drawing.

Making a wash drawing—step by step

In this demonstration Stevan Dohanos shows you how he makes a wash drawing. Starting with a preliminary pencil sketch, he carries you through each stage to the finished picture.

The success of this picture depends on two things. One is the artist's knowledge of how to control wash, and the other is a careful working plan of just what steps to follow to get



1 From a full-size preliminary drawing Dohanos traced down on illustration board all the lines he needed to guide him in painting his picture. Then he prepared the paper by floating a wash of clean water over it. He allowed this to dry completely.

To blend a wash from light to dark, the artist turned his drawing upside down. With a Number 5 brush he rapidly ran a medium gray wash over the entire sky area. While it was still wet he added brushfuls of much darker wash to the upper sky (indefinite blending technique).

When the sky was dry, he floated another graded wash over it to darken it. So that he wouldn't destroy the effect of the first wash, he used as few brush strokes as possible. He blended other very dark tones into this second wash while it was wet.

the effect he wants. Examine the little pencil sketch at the upper left on the facing page and you will see that it contains all the elements which appear in the finished picture, including the general areas of darks and lights. It enabled the artist to proceed in an orderly way without fumbling. This orderly procedure is what produces professional-looking work.

Steven Dohanos

2 Now the picture is right side up. The artist did not turn it until the wash was dry and the dark tones could not run down into the areas he wanted to keep light. Here he starts on the next important step — establishing the range of tones in all parts of the picture. He lightly paints in the shadows on the tree, rock, wagon, and grass, and then he paints the dark crow. It will now be easier for him to judge how dark to make the rest of the tones he paints.

Notice that in some places the sky wash ran over the pencil lines. These overruns will disappear as he continues to work on the picture.

Because he is painting large areas, he still uses his Number 5 brush.

3 Now Dohanos "pulls his picture together." He adjusts the relationship of his tones by making some of them darker. He also makes some of the tones contrast more strongly with those next to them. For example, he has darkened the shadow sides of the tree trunks so they stand out from the sky, while leaving the sunlit sides the pure white of the paper. In doing this he has begun to create the rough bark texture.

With a dark wash he has painted the wagon, making it look solid and real against the sky. He has also strengthened the tones of the foreground shadows.

While some detail shows now, he has not yet given it the finish he plans — he has been more concerned with painting the large, simple areas until their tones have the correct relationship.

4 Changing to his Number 3 brush, the artist puts in the final details and dark accents as planned in his full-size preliminary sketch. He has carefully modeled the shape of the crow, giving it strong black accents. The rough texture of the bark on the tree now makes a fine contrast with the smoother sky in back of it. Both tree and grass were finished with a series of small strokes, and opaque white was used to sharpen up the jagged ends of the broken limbs and indicate a few blades of light grass.

The ragged borders of the finished picture can be cleaned up with opaque white (see page 31) or else the picture can be covered with a mat — a paper frame which conceals the uneven edges.

Check back and see how the original thumbnail sketch served as a guide for painting the tones of the finished picture.

How to paint a head in wash

Jon Whitcomb

In working with wash, it is fairly easy for beginners to lay in smooth flat tones, as on a sky or the side of a building, or to get interesting effects with indefinite blending. But the subtle gradations and details needed to make a head require more planning and ability to control the wash.

Jon Whitcomb's step-by-step demonstration shows you how wash can be used to obtain even the most delicate effects. Once you learn how to control it, you can create just the details and changes in light and shade you need in a face or any other kind of figure or form. But it does take practice.

Look at Whitcomb's finished picture – the last in the series. At first it may seem rather complicated to you. If you study it for a moment, however, you will see that it actually contains very few details. It is effective chiefly because Whitcomb chose

1 Over softly penciled outlines, Whitcomb paints a light gray tone, which begins to establish the shadow area of his picture. After this has dried completely, he paints a medium gray tone over it, but stops short of the edge of the first wash. This light edge — you can see it on the forehead and neck — tends to soften the division between the light and shadow areas.

2 Whitcomb establishes the over-all tonal effect early. First he paints a light wash over the entire skin area, the eyes, and teeth. Then, with ink, he paints the blacks: hair, eyebrows, eyes, nostrils, and corners of mouth — just as was done on the fireman on page 30. He has left the light-struck areas of the hair white because he is still working in bold, flat areas of tone, with no serious effort yet at modeling.

the correct values or shades for the large, simple areas. Step 3 proves this. Aside from the fact that the large values have been progressively built up, it contains no more details than Steps 1 and 2, yet it looks almost as finished as the final picture.

Besides pointing out the importance of controlling wash, these pictures demonstrate the value of careful, preliminary planning — of having a good basic drawing and a well-thought-out plan for whites, grays and darks.

Always remember that the more carefully you plan your drawing, the more directly and boldly you can paint.

Mr. Whitcomb did this demonstration on illustration board, using a tube of lampblack, ink and two water-color brushes, Numbers 3 and 5. Opaque white and grays were used for high lights and corrections.

3 Now that the light and dark areas of the drawing are definitely established, the artist starts working within these areas to model such forms as the jawbone, nostrils, lips, etc. Observe how he uses the graded wash to suggest the rounding of the forehead. He also starts modeling the hair in the light areas, leaving the white of the paper in places for high lights.

Reproduced same size as original

4 The modeling is completed, but Whitcomb has not lost his strong, simple pattern of whites, blacks and grays. Notice the subtle modeling on the girl's lighter cheek. Some edges of the hair he has softened with a damp brush. With small touches of opaque white and grays he has added sparkling high lights. He has softened the edge between light and shadow on chin and neck with touches of thin opaque.

adolf Dehn

In this landscape by Adolf Dehn you see more effects you can get with wash. The artist began by wetting the entire sky area. When it was partly dry, he washed in the dark sky at the top, leaving white paper for the lightest clouds. When the wash accidentally ran into the clouds, he quickly blotted it with a wad of facial tissue. Where he wanted a soft cloud edge, however, he allowed the wash to run. When the sky was dry, he painted the distant mountains. Note the indefinite blending in the foothills and foreground. There's a "dry-brush" effect here, too — in some of the trees and the field to the right — created by quickly "dragging" a lightly loaded brush over the rough surface of the dry paper. The white flowers in the fields were scratched out with the corner of a razor blade.

Courtesy Look Magazine

ALBERT DORNE

This realistic picture of an actual battle called for a more controlled handling of wash than in the scene above. Here, Albert Dorne uses the same technique shown in the picture of the fireman on Page 30 — black ink lines are first drawn with a brush, then the wash tones are added. He painted the soldiers, their equipment, and the rocky foreground with meticulous care. In striking contrast with this crisp technique is the indefinite blending he used to create the smoke of the explosion. A few high lights and accents are painted with opaque white. The picture is reproduced in its actual size.

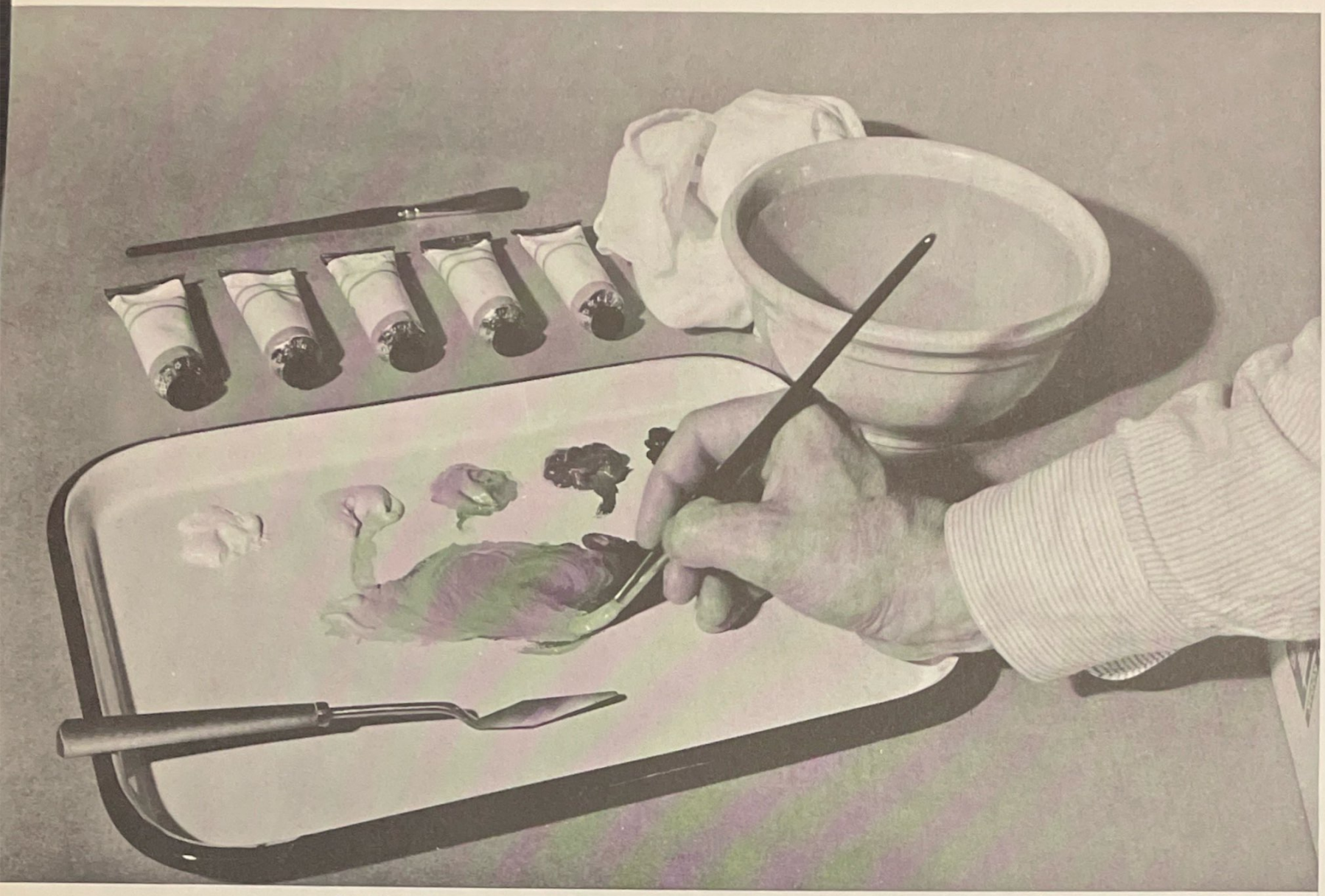
© The Curtis Publishing Co.

There are few ironclad rules about wash — it can be used in many ways, to create countless effects, as demonstrated in this illustration of Al Parker's. Notice particularly the treatment of the wash in the robe. It is quite free and loose, and exploits fully the accidental effects obtainable with a very wet wash. This wash has a fresh, spontaneous feeling: once put down, it was not worked over.

Courtesy Bur-Mil

(Robert Fawcett)

In preparing this advertising illustration, Robert Fawcett started with a carefully planned and highly detailed ink drawing. The complex pattern of light, shadow and line on the figure and table stands out sharply against the flat wash Fawcett used on the background. This picture is much more precise and disciplined in its treatment than any of the others on these two pages. Compare it with them — especially with the free, loose illustration above.



Five tubes of opaque water colors ("prepared opaque grays") — ranging in value from white to black — are basic equipment for opaque painting. Squeeze a pile of each tone on your palette (here, a butcher's tray) and you can prepare any in-between tone you want by mixing paint from these with a palette knife or brush. Round sable water-color brushes Numbers 3 and 5 are used with opaque, and a flat sable brush helps you to paint in large areas rapidly. A good-sized water bowl and a paint rag complete your equipment.

Opaque water-color painting

Opaque water color is one of the most widely used mediums in commercial art and for this reason it deserves your careful study. Most beginners — and professionals — enjoy it because of its unique qualities. You can make changes readily on opaque, it dries quickly, and it can be controlled at all times.

Many artists like opaque painting for the purely physical satisfaction it gives. You will enjoy the "pull" of the paint as you brush it on large areas, and you will thrill to the sparkling effects you create with light, delicate touches of the brush as you put in high lights, dark accents or details. Opaque has reproduction qualities similar to those of wash.

Here we will show you some practical ways of handling opaque. Your greatest pleasure, of course, will come from your own experiments in applying and manipulating the medium. Only your personal experience of working with opaque can give you a true understanding of its versatility.

Your materials

The materials you need for working in black and white opaque are very simple: a set of prepared opaque grays, brushes, a palette knife, a palette, paper, a large bowl of water, and a paint rag for cleaning your brush and palette.

Opaque grays. You will need five tubes of good-quality opaque water color. Get a tube each of white, light gray, middle gray, dark gray and black, as shown in the photo above. These grays — they are generally called prepared grays or retouch grays — also come in jars, but most artists find it more convenient to use tubes from which they can easily squeeze the exact amount of paint they need. These paints can be had in "warm" or "cool" grays. (Cool grays are slightly bluish — warm grays are very slightly brownish.) The warm grays are best for reproduction.

Brushes. For opaque, use the same Number 3 and 5 sable brushes you use for transparent wash. You will find your flat sable brush ideal for painting large, flat areas. The same principle of brush sizes applies, too: large areas — large brushes; smaller areas — smaller brushes.

Palette knife. Many artists find a palette knife useful for mixing different grays. It is not essential. You can use your brush for this purpose.

Palette. There are many types of porcelain palettes available, but the most satisfactory one is a butcher's tray, shown in the photo on page 40. You can also use a white dinner plate.

Paper. Use a heavy paper that has a slight grain or tooth that will hold the paint. Illustration board is best here, just as for transparent wash, because it is heavy enough not to buckle. For small drawings you can use a heavy kid-finish Bristol.

How to paint with opaque

In the last few pages you have been studying how to paint in wash, which is transparent. For your light tones you used a light wash which allowed much of the white of the paper to show through, and for your dark tones you added more lampblack, thus letting less of the white show through. Opaque water color works very differently.

When we call something opaque, we mean that we cannot see through it. Opaque water color is water-color paint that covers the paper, or any other surface you paint on, and allows nothing to show through.

In transparent wash, you lightened your color by adding more water. In opaque, however, you lighten a color by adding white.

In wash drawing you used lots of water, but with opaque you use only enough to make the paint spread smoothly with your brush. Never try to lighten opaque by thinning it with water. Lighten it by adding white.

In opaque painting you paint in your light tones as well as your dark ones. You do not depend on the white surface of the paper for your high lights as you do when making a transparent wash drawing.

Set palette

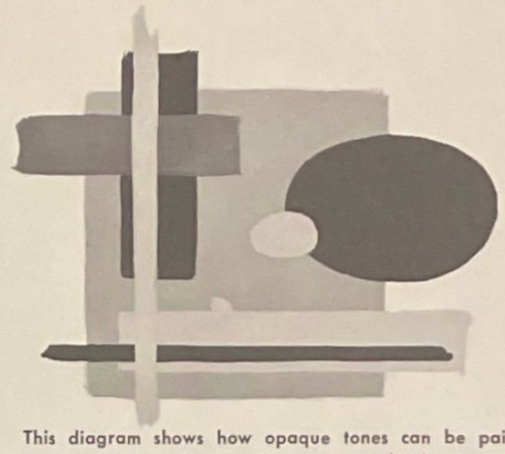
The proper way to prepare for working in opaque water color is to arrange what is called a "set palette." This consists of a series of tones ranging from white to black, from which you will choose the tones you need in painting a picture. Arrange the tones along one side of your palette or tray in little piles, as shown in the photograph on page 40. For your general practice these five tones should be enough to start your work. When you need "in-between" tones they can be mixed by taking paint from two side-by-side tones and mixing them on another part of the palette.

How to mix your own grays

Although it is much more convenient to use the prepared grays — almost everyone does — you can, if necessary, mix your own gray tones. Simply mix opaque white and lampblack together. Vary the amount of white or black for lighter or darker tones.

You will notice that the mixture has a slightly bluish cast. This is not important except when you are doing a picture that is to be reproduced. The bluish cast makes it hard for the engraver to achieve a good reproduction. To get rid of the bluish cast, add a touch of yellow ochre or burnt umber.

How opaque paint works



This diagram shows how opaque tones can be painted one over the other, each tone completely concealing those underneath. In this case the large middle-gray square was painted first and allowed to dry. The other tones were painted over this square, each one being allowed to dry before another tone was painted over it.

1 This first step of a simple demonstration shows one of the special qualities of opaque. The paint is not transparent — it hides the white of the paper completely.

2 Another special quality of opaque is that you can paint light or dark tones over each other with equal ease. You don't have to use the white paper for the whites and high lights of your picture — you paint them in when and as you need them.

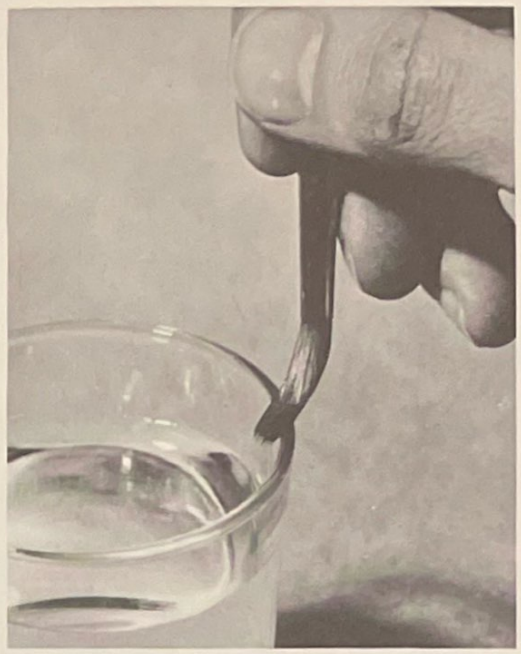
How to mix opaque water colors

Two of the most important things you must learn to do with opaque are (1) mix the tone you want and (2) give it the right consistency to cover your paper well.

When properly mixed, opaque paint is about as thick as rich cream, brushes on your paper easily, and completely covers pencil lines or other paint.

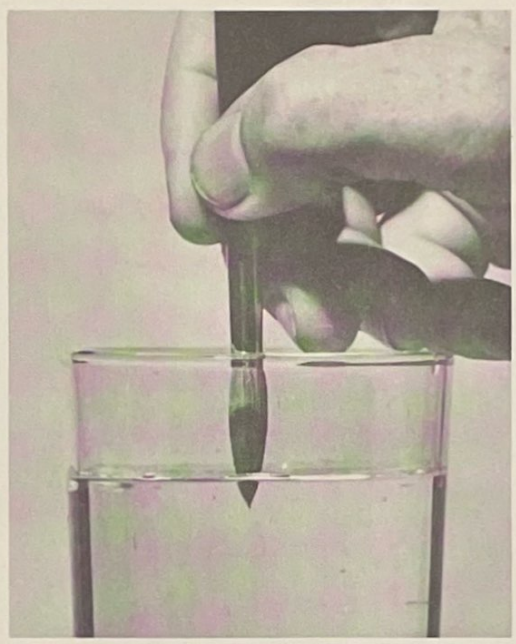
These pictures show you, step by step, how to mix opaque to the right tone and thickness. It will take much practice, but it is only through practice that you learn.

1 First squeeze your colors in the "set palette" arrangement shown on page 40. The palette shown here has wells, or hollows, for the paint. Any clean dish or porcelain tray will do, however. Put a drop of water on each pile of paint to keep it moist.

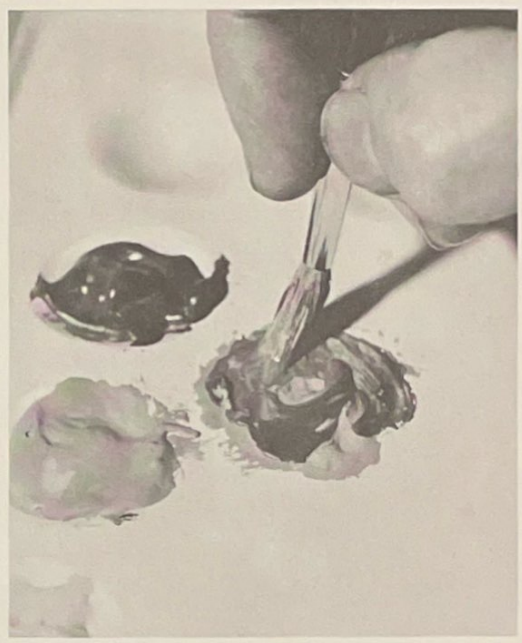


2 Wet your brush in clean water and press it against the side of your water container until most of the water runs out. Use only enough water to make your opaque the right creamy consistency. It is easy to add more water — but you can't take it out.

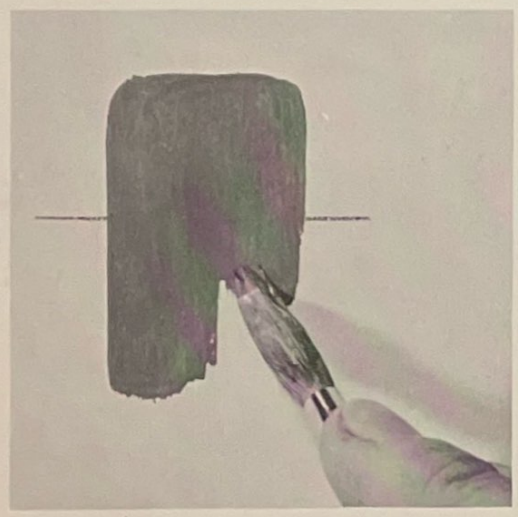
3 To mix an in-between tone, lift some paint from the lighter gray pile and put it on the palette, rubbing most of it off your brush. Then lift some paint from the darker gray pile, but don't streak the lighter gray into it. Mix both brushfuls of paint together.



4 If the new mixture is only a little too thick to work into a smooth, creamy consistency, add a little water. Dip the tip of the brush into your water, soak up a small quantity and mix it into the paint. If you still need more water, repeat the process.



5 In this picture you can still see streaks of the two original tones. Continue stirring until your mixture is smooth, creamy and even-toned. When it has the proper consistency, the paint will barely run when the palette is tipped sideways.



6 This opaque has the right thickness. It brushes on easily, and completely covers the pencil line. This is the key to successful handling of opaque paint.

Too thin: The paint is streaky and it does not cover the pencil line. It looks more like transparent wash than opaque. Add more paint.

Too thick: Too little water. Although it has covered the pencil line, the paint is so thick it will not handle well. Add more water.

Two ways to blend opaque

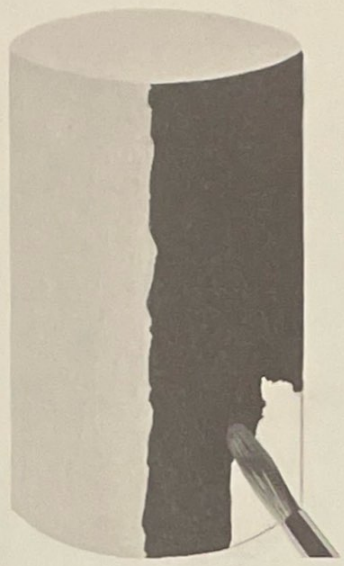
If you paint one tone of opaque next to another of a different value, you get a "hard" edge between them. When painting a rounded form – such as a tree trunk, a silo, or a head – it is necessary to soften this edge by blending one tone into the next. There are two methods of doing this: wet-brush blending and dry-brush blending. Each method has its advantages, and you should practice both until you are thoroughly familiar with them.

Only experience can tell you how much water, paint or pressure to use on your brush.

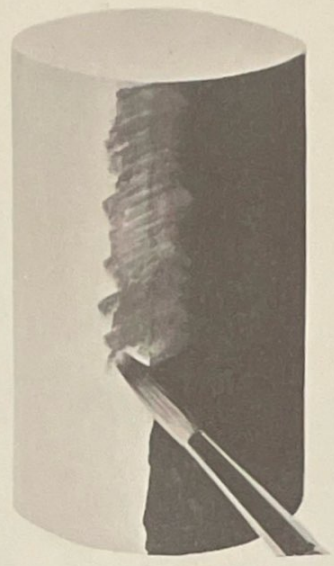
This close-up view shows the smooth, rounded effect you can get with wet-brush blending.

Wet-brush blending

In this method you blend different values by working them into each other with a wet brush. Remember that opaque paint looks slightly different when dry. If you are in doubt about a value, let the paint dry before you rework it. Don't work over any area too long.



1 Mix your paints to the consistency of heavy cream and lay in the flat values next to each other. Only two values are shown here, but there could be more. Don't make the edge between them too straight.



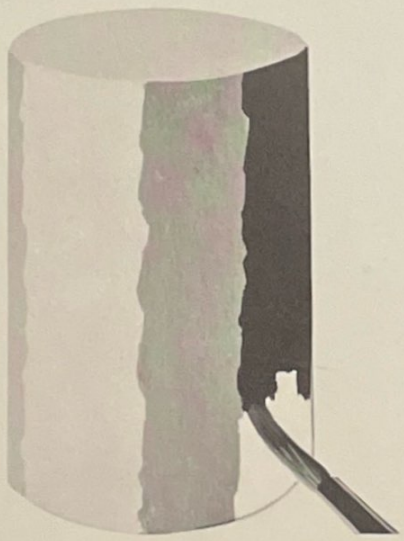
2 Now run a fairly wet clean brush in a back-and-forth stroke down the edge between the values to be blended. The mixing of the light and dark paint will make a value about halfway between them.

3 Light, vertical strokes will create this kind of a gradation or "soft" edge between the values. Don't use too wet a brush and don't press too hard, or your brush will pick up the paint from the surface.

In this close-up view you see how the in-between tone is applied over the hard edge between two values in order to soften it.

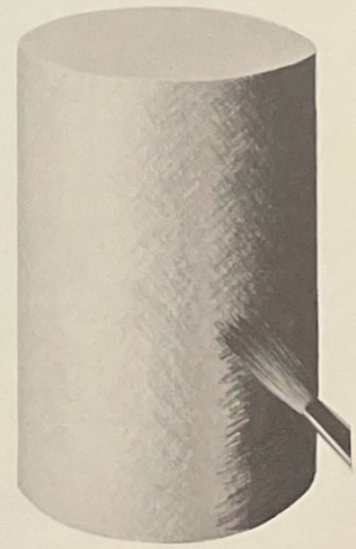
Dry-brush blending

For dry-brush blending you mix a tone halfway between the two tones you want to blend. You apply this tone over the "hard" edge between them with a dry brush.



1 Don't try to make a neat, straight edge as you paint your tones next to each other. Cover the area completely. The lightest tone here is white paint — not white paper.

2 Now prepare a few in-between tones, each one about halfway in value between the light and dark side of an edge to be softened. Use a blotter or cloth to dry your brush and, with the tip "feathered" as shown, apply the paint lightly.



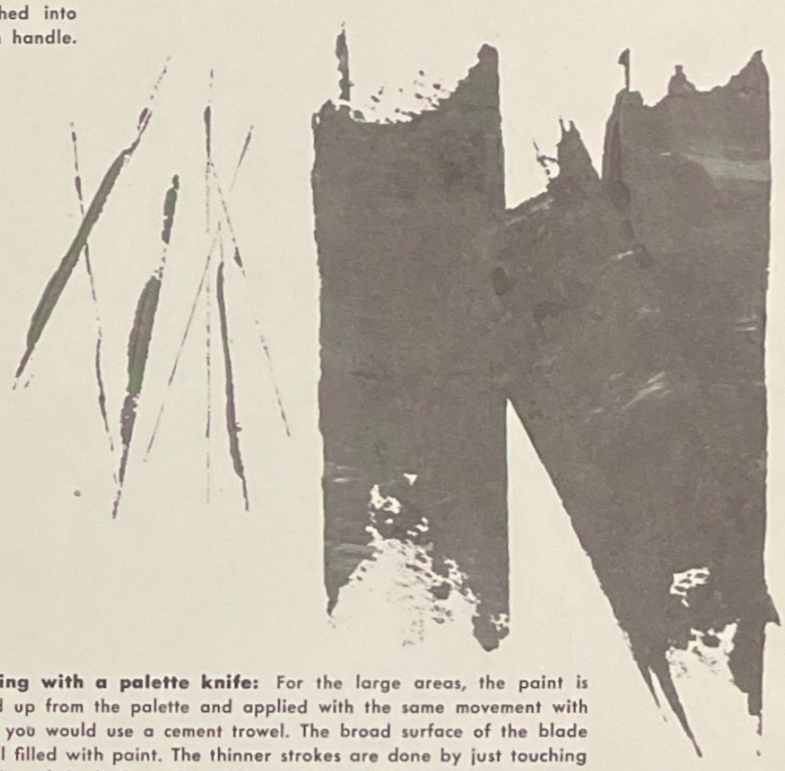
3 Varying the direction of the strokes and working back and forth will create this effect. Lighten or darken your in-between tones to make one value pass smoothly into the other. These blending strokes will dry very quickly, allowing you to check the values without delay.

Scumbling technique: Opaque tones of different values are brushed on, one on top of the other, with a "scrubbing" motion while the paint is still wet. This way of handling paint is known as scumbling.

Split-brush technique: A brush well loaded with paint is brushed back and forth on a dry piece of paper until the brush hairs split to form several points. Then, with the brush held at right angles to the paper, the tips of the split hairs are dragged lightly over the surface.

Scratching into wet paint: First, a fairly thin opaque tone is brushed on — then lines are scratched into it with the tip of the brush handle.

Using a paint roller: The paint is picked up from the palette with a small rubber roller and applied to the paper. In this case light tones are put over dark tones, and the direction of the roller is varied.



Painting with a palette knife: For the large areas, the paint is picked up from the palette and applied with the same movement with which you would use a cement trowel. The broad surface of the blade is well filled with paint. The thinner strokes are done by just touching the edge of the knife to the palette and then to the paper.

Dripping the paint on: Here is a completely free and accidental effect. This technique is guaranteed to reduce your fear of handling opaque. First a middle tone is brushed on quite freely. Then the other tones are picked up and dripped from the tip of the brush to create the effects you see here. With practice you will learn to control these accidental effects and get the results you want.

Stippling: A pointed sable brush, well loaded with paint, is pushed or jabbed at the surface of the paper. Under pressure the hairs fan out to create the texture you see here.

This brick wall is a combination of the roller technique and strokes applied with the edge of the palette knife.

First the sky is brushed in with a light gray tone. While this is wet the smoke tones are dropped into it, creating the "bleeding" edge of the smoke. The buildings were painted after the sky had dried.

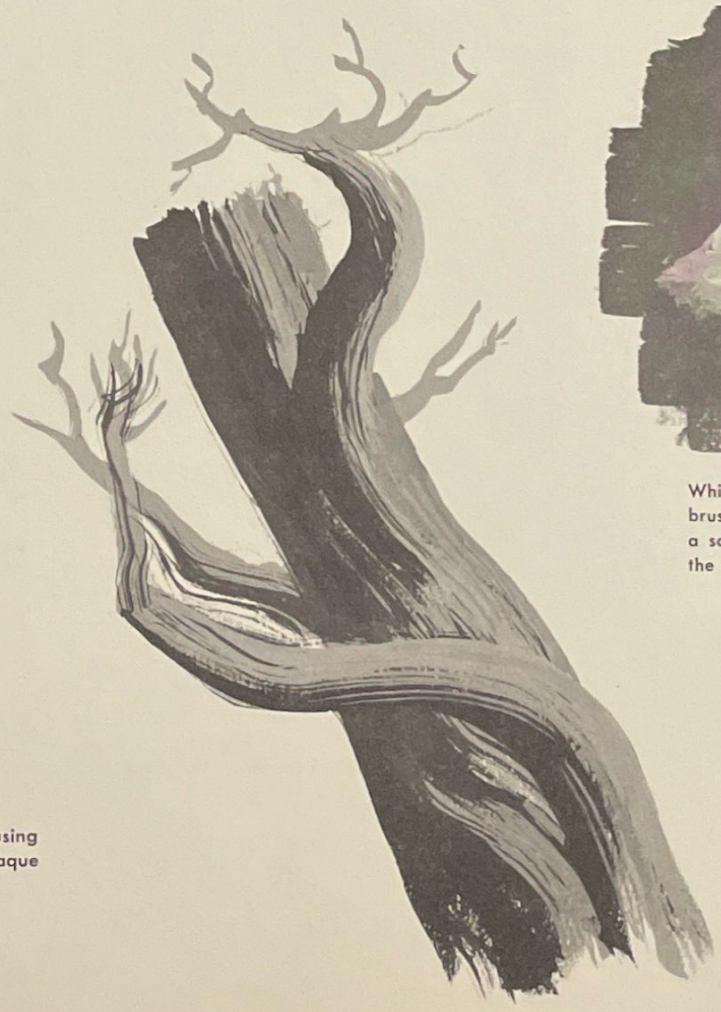
Get acquainted with opaque

Here you see some of the infinite varieties of textures and effects that can be obtained with opaque water color. The examples on the opposite page have been done quite freely. On this page you see how these effects and some others may be used to paint realistic forms. Try these textures and effects, and also see how many of your own you can create. Experiment . . . experience . . . discover. This is the surest way to learn how to use opaque effectively.

Here are three different ways you can suggest a texture like grass. The area at the left is done entirely with strokes of a small pointed sable. Some are dark — some very light. The center section shows the effect of scratching into a tone with the tip of the brush handle. On the right side, both light and dark streaks were applied by just touching the edge of the palette knife to the surface.

These cloud effects are painted with the same basic wet-in-wet method as above, but light tones are dropped on the wet surface.

Texture of wood grain is created by using the split-brush technique over a flat opaque tone which has been allowed to dry.



While the background sky is still wet, the darkest part of the cloud is brushed over it. Then, thicker layers of lighter colors are built up with a scumbling technique. Don't be timid when you work this way — push the paint around freely.

This tree demonstrates the use of the split brush to indicate bark texture. Both the shadow side and the light tones are painted in quite solidly. The split-hair effects are most obvious along the edge between the light and shadow tones.

A simple opaque demonstration

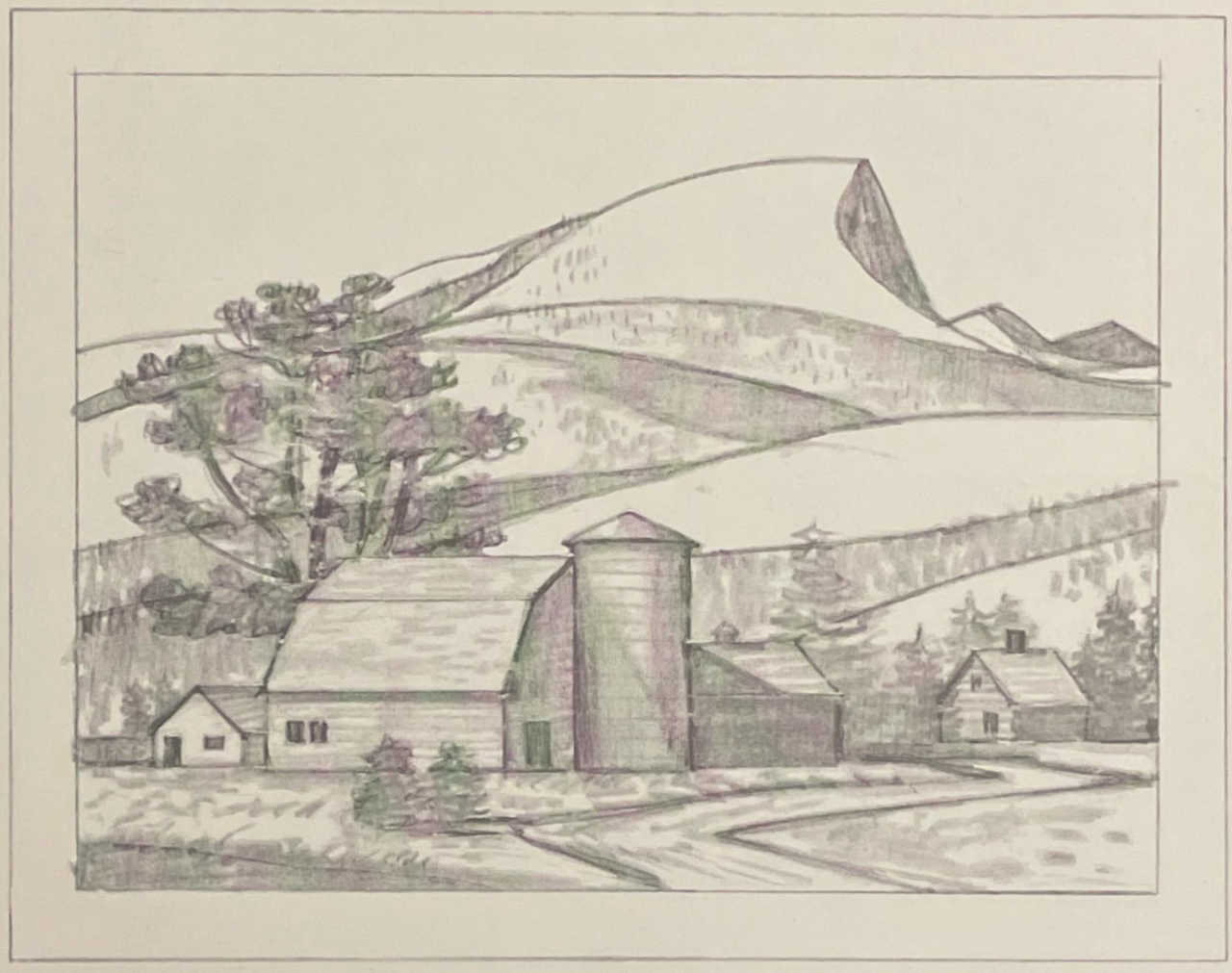
You can use opaque in many different ways, depending upon the kind of picture you want to make. Here we show you how it can be used to paint a carefully designed and rather formal picture. Neither the method nor approach here is difficult.

Much planning went into this picture. Before the artist started to paint, he worked out all of the details as well as the large shapes of his design in a pencil drawing. He decided at this stage which parts of his picture would be light, dark, or medium — and to what degree. He determined the precise steps he would take when he began to paint with the opaque. While actually painting, he followed this plan closely.

His procedure, as you will see, was fairly simple. The steps he took were few. But through them he was able to build up a painting that appears surprisingly rich in detail.

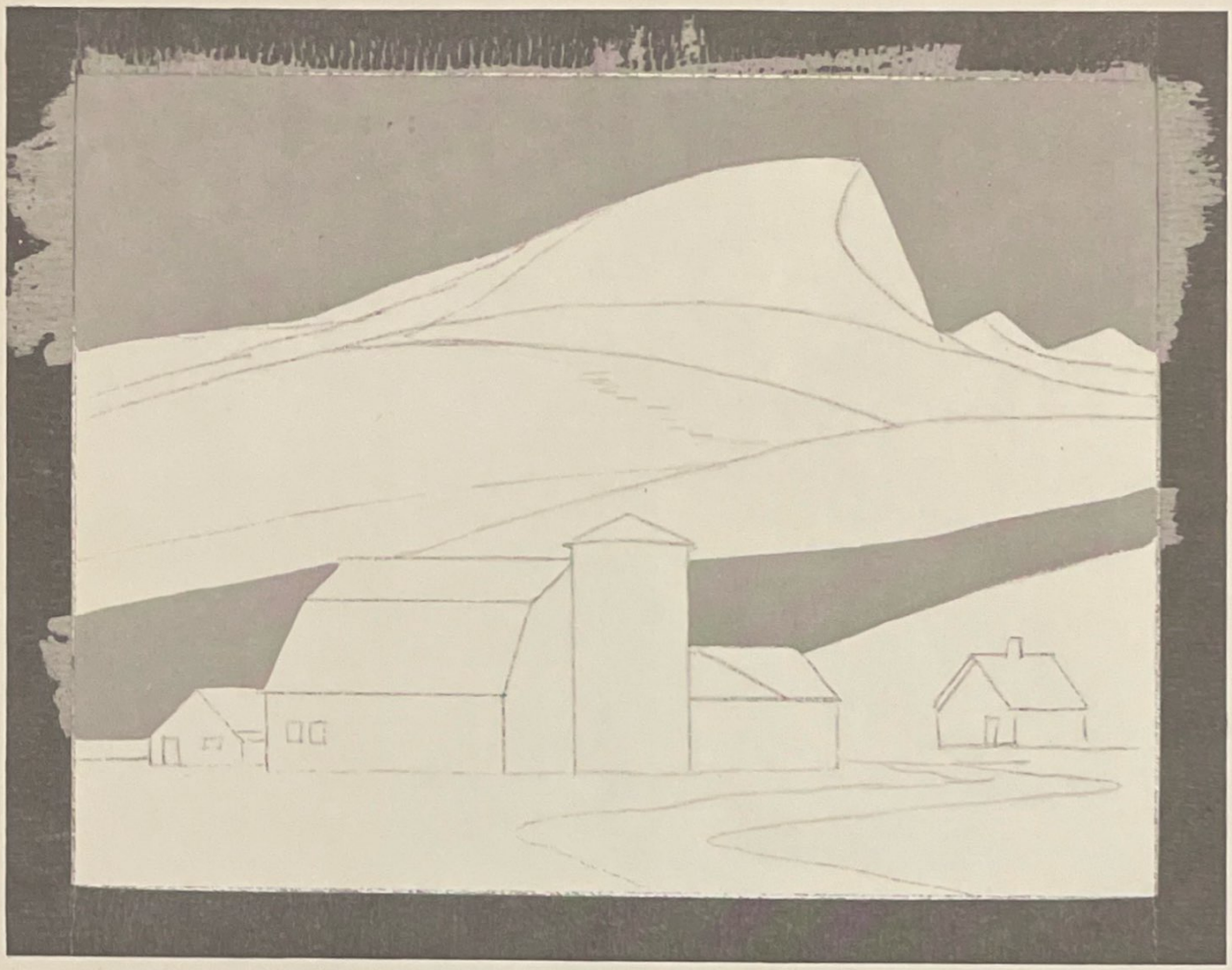
The key to making successful pictures like this is to prepare a careful preliminary drawing — plan the steps in which you will paint the picture — and apply the paint according to the rules we have shown you.

We urge you to do some painting in this manner for two reasons. First — some jobs require it. And, second, the procedure will teach you much that can help you to control the medium and use it effectively in other styles of opaque painting.



1 This is the preliminary pencil drawing on tracing paper. You should carefully work out your picture problems at this stage, before you start to paint. The basic design comes first — and the general size, shape and position of your major light, dark and middle tones. Then add detail. Next, turn the drawing over and thoroughly blacken the back of the sheet with a soft pencil. Turn the drawing back over your illustration board and run a sharp hard pencil over the outlines. The pressure will transfer them to the board below.

It's a good idea, at the very start, to fit your tracing accurately over your illustration board, then fasten the tissue to your drawing board with masking tape. Trace down the main lines of the picture and then turn the tracing back and paint. When you need to trace more detail, simply turn the tracing down over the picture. Be sure the paint is dry.



2 Here you see the preliminary pencil drawing traced down and the first gray tones painted in. Trace only the important outlines, not the entire drawing. You should omit details for now — otherwise they will be covered with opaque when you paint the large areas, and would have to be traced down again later on.

The tone or value of the sky in a landscape is very important, so you usually establish it first. Here the gray sky tone is also used on part of the mountain. Keep the color creamy in consistency and brush it out fairly smooth — avoid a watery or washlike effect. At this stage, concentrate on the flat tone. It is a mistake to go back over the color when it begins to dry; the brush will "pull" and cause the surface to roughen. Put on your opaque quickly and neatly — then leave it alone.

Notice that the edges of the picture are covered with masking tape. If you use this, you can paint freely and quickly, letting your strokes go right over the tape. When you remove it, the borders of your picture will be completely clean.

3 Now the first darks are established, along with more grays. Darks are important in a picture and, if you paint them in early, you have a better basis of comparison for your light and middle tones. As your picture progresses, use your tracing-paper sketch to trace down detailed forms directly over the dry tones. The dark trees were added this way.

Notice that there is no attempt to make the silo look round. It is painted in a flat shadow; the edges will be blended later. Some of the grays on the mountains will also be blended at a later stage, but, for the present, only flat areas of tone are painted, and subtleties of form or modeling are ignored. Make very certain at the beginning that you mix up enough paint for each tone, so you won't have to stop, remix, and match grays later.

4 More details, like the large tree and the two small ones, have been traced down on the underlying tones. The large tree was painted with a dry brush, using many small strokes. For this kind of work, keep a blotter tacked to your board and, after you fill your brush with color, wipe it out a bit, flattening the tip at the same time. This gives each stroke an edge made up of many fine lines. This type of edge is much softer than one produced with a full wet brush. It is easy to suggest the uneven edges of the foliage with a dry brush.

Notice that some of the edges are modeled, and darks have been added. A dry brush made the soft edges of the shadows on the silo. On the lower part of the mountain, a series of small dot-like strokes of a fairly dry brush suggest distant forests. On the barn roof, a soft, graded tone makes more definite the separation between the two planes of the angle. The top edges of the silo and barn are modeled in the same way. Areas can also be separated by a single line.

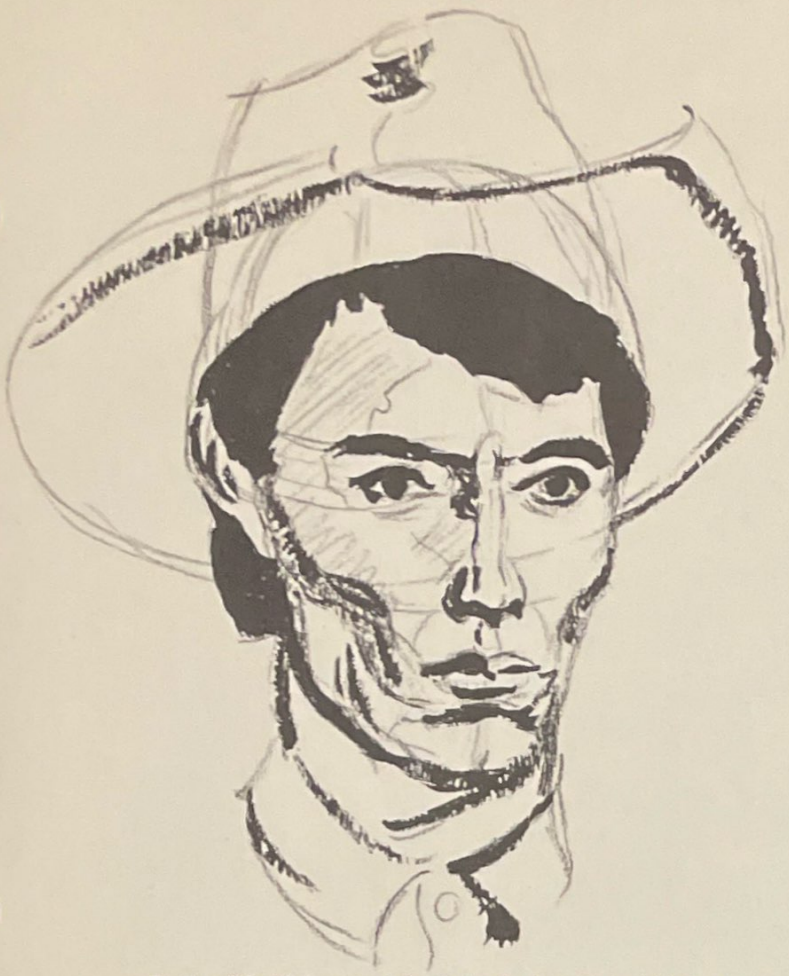
5 Here is the finished picture. Once the large areas have been established, it is a simple matter to add details. Remember, add only those details that will help the picture — don't overdo it.

In order to add variety, texture has been given to several more areas of flat gray and white. Finally, some pure blacks were put in the trees. These blacks not only model the branches and suggest light and shade — they also have a definite place in the whole scheme of values. These little solid blacks are crisp, dynamic notes that add punch. The picture, reproduced actual size, was made with just two water-color brushes, Numbers 3 and 5.

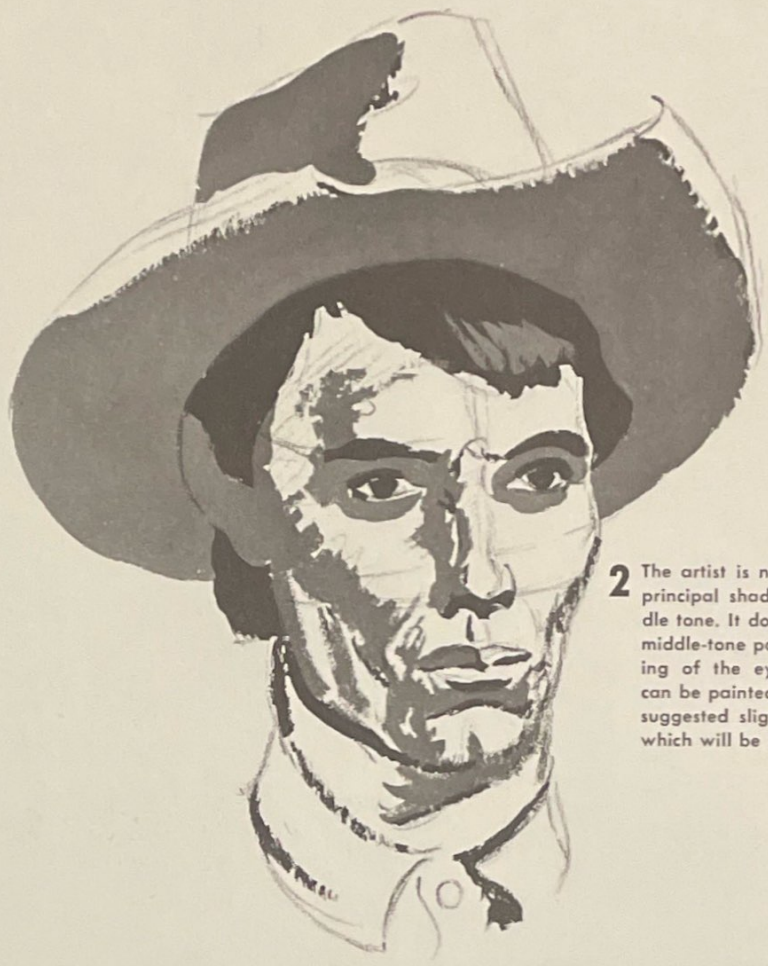
To take off masking tape without damaging the surface of the illustration board, remove the tape slowly, pulling it away from the picture edge. Pull it diagonally back over itself — not up. Next, go over any rough edges with opaque white.

Painting a head in opaque

In these step-by-step pictures Harold Von Schmidt demonstrates how he paints a head in opaque. In the first drawing you can see that he has indicated lightly in pencil the areas which will be the principal shadow tones. Gradually he establishes a pattern of light and dark. As he works he constantly thinks in terms of where the light is falling on the head. He is literally modeling with light and shadow.

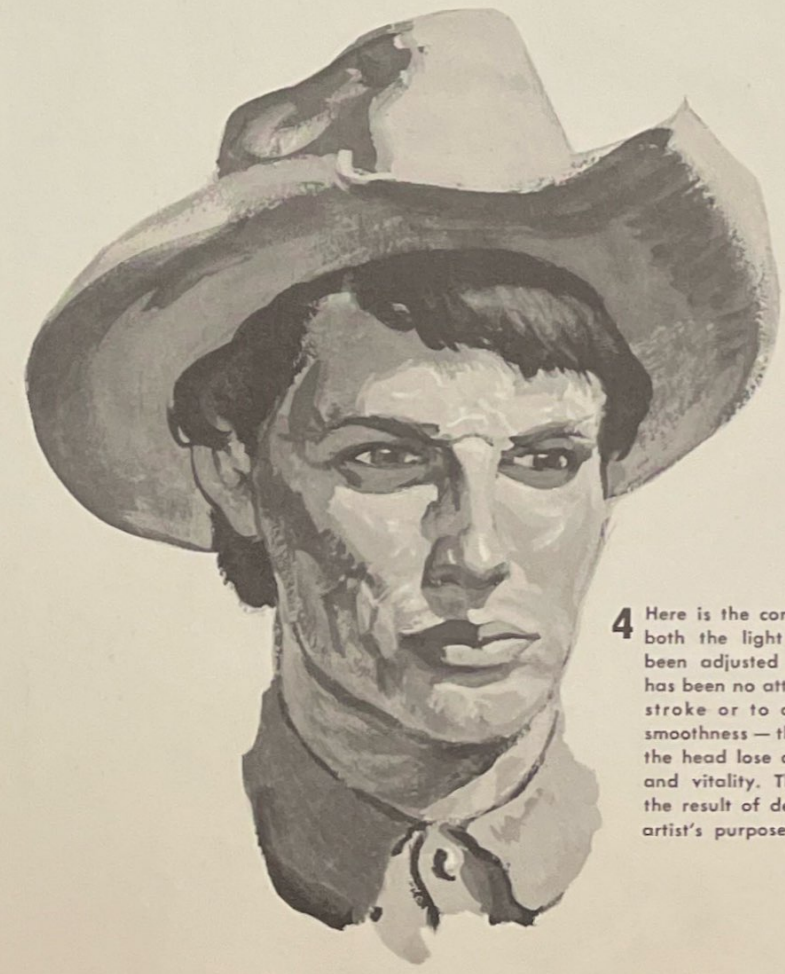


1 Von Schmidt has started painting in the principal black areas over the pencil drawing. He is actually drawing with his brush to fix the placement of the various features and the principal bony forms of the skull. He has painted the hair solid black — since he is working in opaque, he can go back later and paint in the high-light portions. The brushes used are Numbers 3 and 5.



2 The artist is now painting in some of the principal shadow areas with a dark middle tone. It does not matter if some of this middle-tone paint covers part of the drawing of the eyebrows and eyelids — they can be painted in again later. He has also suggested slightly the portion of the hair which will be struck by light.

3 The shadow tone has now been filled in and the modeling has been started in the light areas of the face. It is important to establish your tones over the entire face, for until you do this it is very difficult to decide what the exact final tones should be. Some of the shadow tones here will be painted darker, as you can see in the final picture.



4 Here is the completed head. The tones in both the light and shadow areas have been adjusted for the best effect. There has been no attempt to "hide" every brush stroke or to attain a "photographic" smoothness — this would only have made the head lose a great deal of its strength and vitality. The picture's success is not the result of delicate blending, but of the artist's purposeful choice of values.

1 Von Schmidt quickly covers the entire picture by painting its main areas with almost flat tones of opaque paint. He can then see if each is the right tone and looks effective next to the neighboring tones. He does not attempt to put in details — they will come later. As soon as the paint is dry he can take the next step of lightening or darkening the tones that need it, and start working on modeling and details.

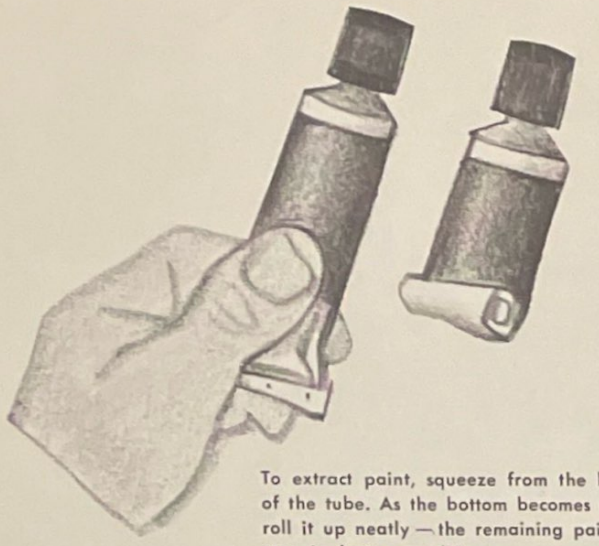
Using opaque in a story illustration

HAROLD VON SCHMIDT

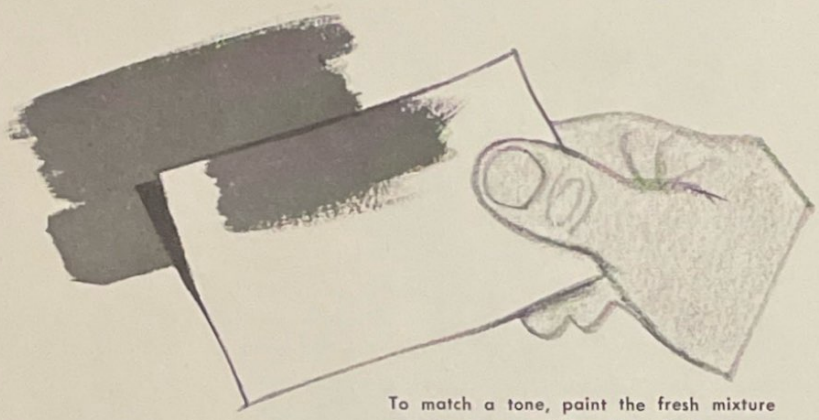
On this page Harold Von Schmidt shows you how he paints a story illustration in opaque. Study this demonstration carefully and you will see that he uses not one, but a combination of the methods we have explained, in order to achieve solidity, texture, detail, and the effect of sunlight. As he goes from step to step, observe particularly how he uses the opaque to cover both light and dark tones. His materials are the same ones we have recommended for you — opaque grays, together with black and white, and a Number 3 and a Number 5 water-color brush. His painting surface is illustration board, on which he lightly sketched the drawing at the start.

2 Here he has started modeling, using both wet-brush and dry-brush methods of blending. Notice the dry-brush strokes on such areas as the hat of the man at the left and on the faces and necks of both men. Where a smoother transition was desired, as on the light shirt sleeve and some of the flesh tones, the wet-brush blending method was used. The foliage and branches have been painted over the flat sky area, and the background shadows developed.

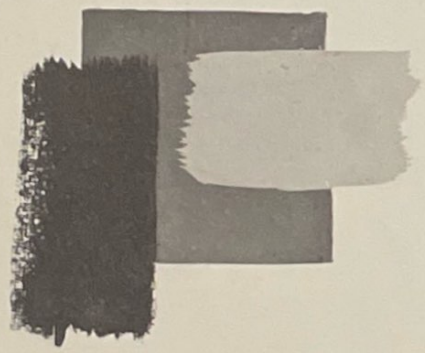
3 In this final stage Von Schmidt has added brilliant lights on the men's hats and shoulders and the foliage. He has "bathed" the rocks in the background in bright sunlight. Observe particularly the high lights on the buckle, cartridges and pistol. Accents and details have been added throughout, using both the wet-brush and dry-brush methods. Always save the final details and high lights for the last — and don't put in any more of them than needed.



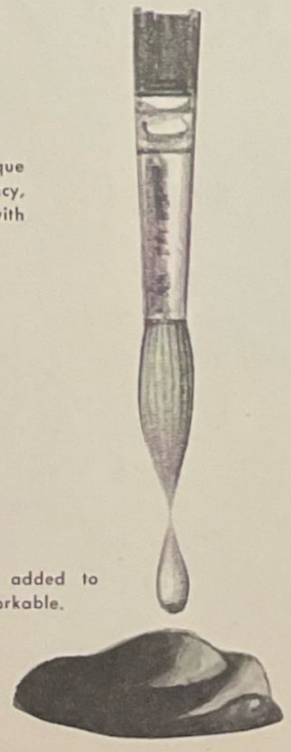
To extract paint, squeeze from the bottom of the tube. As the bottom becomes empty, roll it up neatly — the remaining paint will stay in better condition.



To match a tone, paint the fresh mixture on scrap paper. When it is dry, compare this strip with the tone on your picture.



Changes are easy to make with opaque paint. When it has the right consistency, you can completely cover any tones with lighter or darker paint.



A drop of water periodically added to your paints will keep them workable.

Helpful suggestions

Opaque water color dries rather rapidly on the palette. For this reason it is a good idea to add a drop of water to each pile of paint from time to time. Be sure not to add too much water, however, or the paint will become too thin. Experience will have to guide you, as the speed of drying depends both on atmospheric conditions and on the thickness of the paint.

Don't squeeze out too much paint — it will dry up. It is better to squeeze a fresh batch occasionally.

If you have difficulty unscrewing the cap on a tube of paint, warm the cap with hot water or a match. Before replacing a cap, be sure it is clean and that any excess paint is wiped off the tip of the tube. This will help prevent the cap from sticking.

Occasionally you will open a tube of paint and find the liquid has separated from the pigment. In such a case it is best to allow this liquid to drip onto a piece of scrap paper in order to get rid of it. Too much of this liquid in your paint mixture will prevent it from drying properly.

When opaque paint dries on your palette it is possible to moisten it and carefully work it into the proper soft consistency, but it is best to start with a fresh batch of paint each time you work.

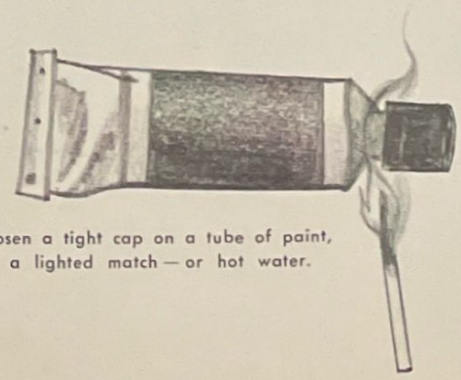
If you find you have prepared too small an amount of opaque, never try to "stretch" it out by thinning it down with water. If you do not have enough of a mixture to cover a given area, mix more paint.

Opaque paint sometimes dries a bit lighter or darker than it looks when wet. As you become more familiar with the medium you will learn to recognize just how much each value will change between "wet" and "dry." When it is necessary to match a tone exactly, try the new tone out on a piece of scrap paper, painting it along the edge. Allow it to dry and then place this test strip on your picture to compare the tones.

Paint with a well-filled brush, but do not have it so heavily loaded that the paint "piles up" and forms ridges. If you see that the paint has gone onto the paper unevenly, it is all right to brush back over the area while it is still wet, in order to smooth out any ridges and so on. Do not try to brush back into an area that has become almost dry, as this will cause streaks.

If you notice that the paint is becoming too thick, uneven, or mottled in the area you are painting, moisten the area with a clean wet brush and lift off the paint with a blotter. Repeat several times until you reach the surface of the paper. After this dries you can repaint the entire area.

If only a small part of a large area of tone requires correction, you will often find it easier to repaint the entire area rather than struggle to get the exact match for the small part.



To loosen a tight cap on a tube of paint, apply a lighted match — or hot water.

Painting for reproduction

Here you see two reproductions of the same picture, painted by Al Parker in opaque water color. The large one is the actual size of his original. Examine it carefully and you will observe the typical brush-stroke effect you get with opaque. Now look at the small reproduction. It's the same picture, but it is much smoother. The detail of the brush work is lost. That is what reduction in size does to a picture.

When you paint in opaque, don't worry if brush strokes show up — work naturally and directly. With practice you will learn to blend your strokes as much as you wish. As a rule, however, you will find it neither necessary nor desirable to lose them completely. If your picture is reduced for printing, they will be softened quite a bit. If it isn't reduced, the strokes can add variety and interest to your picture.

Creating textures with opaque

Because opaque is thick and can be applied in different ways, you can create many different and exciting textures with it. You can use these textures to suggest the appearance and even the actual feel of the objects you paint. This scene by Peter Helck shows you some of the ways you can do this. The small reproduction shows the entire picture; the large one is an area from the picture reproduced in its actual size.

One thing that makes Peter Helck's pictures so powerful is that, as he paints, he not only thinks how objects and textures look – he also thinks how they would feel to the touch. Study the textures in this scene to see how the paint is applied to achieve them. By experimenting with opaque, you will learn how to get effects like these in your own paintings.

Courtesy General Elec

A very light paint applied to top surfaces suggests sunlight striking hard metal.

Brush strokes of varied tones on side surfaces create weathered effect. This paint is applied rather thinly, as it represents a smooth surface.

Thick, pasty paint is used to represent side of hill. The distant hills are done with thinner, smoother paint.

Since opaque paint covers, it is ideal, in the final stage of painting, for adding such details as rods, chains, and cables.

Bold brush strokes on side of cab suggest chipped paint and rust.

Tones of thick opaque, boldly applied, suggest rough, jagged rocks. On nearer ones, surface textures are created by stippled brush strokes — or daubing the paint on with an up-and-down motion.

Irregular tones and brush strokes show scarred, mud-covered look of tractor treads.

Smoother, thinner paint is appropriate to suggest texture of lumber.

Line and wash: Austin Briggs did this drawing with brush and ink — then applied large, simple areas of transparent wash over it. Interesting effects are achieved where he permitted the wet wash tone to settle and create dark streaks.

Mixed mediums

One by one, in this lesson you have met the four basic mediums: pencil, ink, transparent wash, and opaque water color. Although each is often used by itself — in its "pure" form — artists sometimes "mix" them or use them in combination. They may use line and wash in the same picture, or line, wash, and opaque, or any other combination that will give the result they want. What counts most of all is the quality of the picture itself and how well it fits the purpose for which it is made.

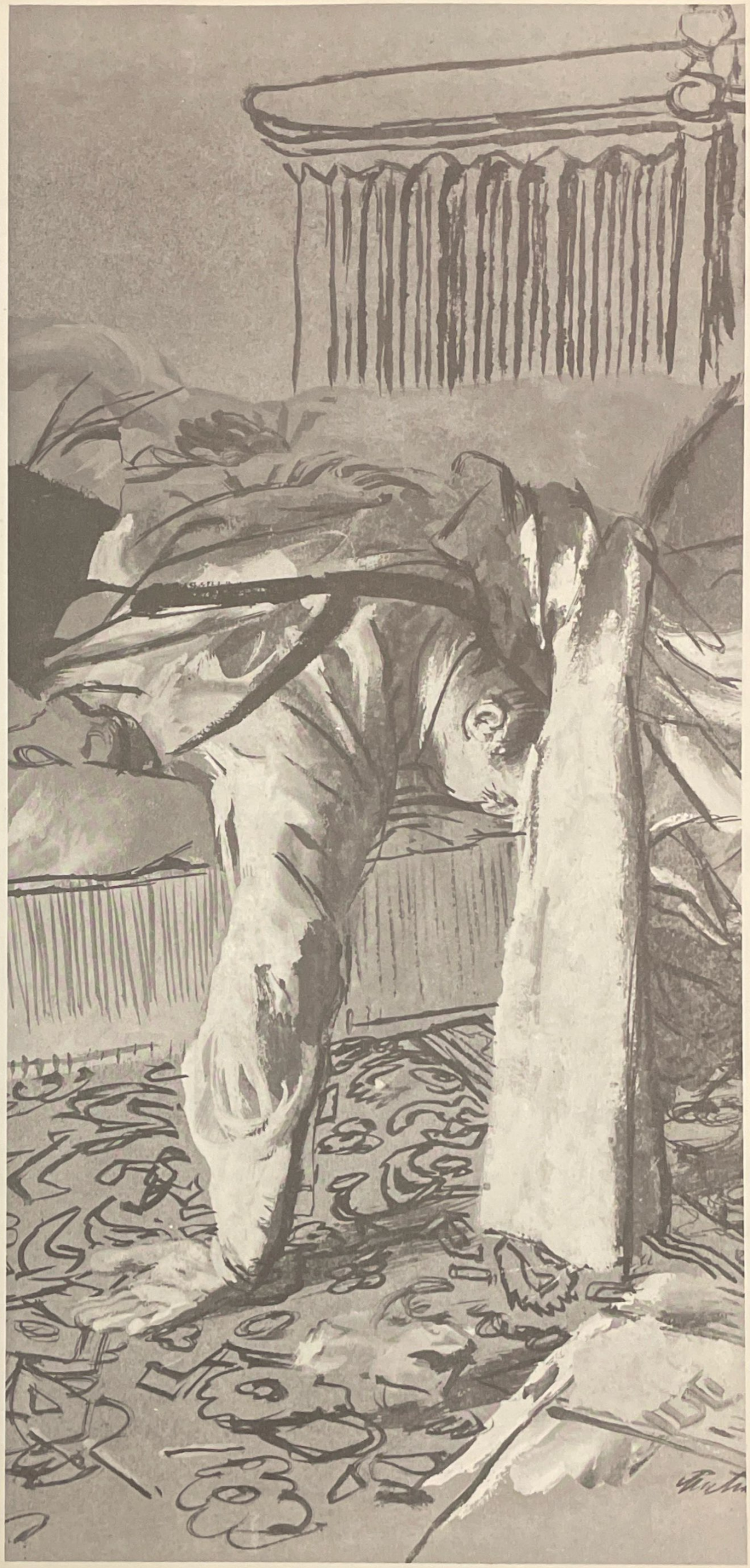
On this and the two following pages you see some pictures made with "mixed mediums." They will give you a good idea of how you can combine the mediums, and the exciting effects you can produce when you combine them.

Five mediums: In this head Jon Whitcomb combined all four of the basic mediums, plus pastel. The blacks are put in with ink, the veil and the shadow tones of the face are transparent wash, and the light areas of the face are done with opaque paint. Pencil strokes suggest hair texture, and strokes of a sharpened pastel stick soften the shadow edge on the forehead.

Courtesy Cosmopolitan Magazine

Line, wash and opaque: In the painting shown above — part of it is reproduced in its actual size at the right — three mediums are combined by Austin Briggs with striking effect.

To create this somber scene with its powerful sense of mystery and its dramatic play of light, the artist first gave the entire painting surface a gray wash. When this was thoroughly dry, he traced the important lines of his pencil sketch over it and then drew them in with brush and ink. The solid blacks of the man's trousers and the table were also painted with ink. Then, with a dark wash, he put in the top of the bed and the darks of the man's shirt. The light areas were painted with different light opaque grays. While these were still wet, he painted pure white into them. In some cases, too, he thinned his opaque and used it more like wash.



Pencil and wash: Here is an interesting variation on the line and wash technique. In place of the usual ink line, Albert Dorne has used pencil. Because of the pencil's grayness the over-all effect is somewhat lighter and softer than it would be if ink had been used.

First the artist made a detailed pencil drawing. Over this he lightly washed transparent colored inks. Outside edges of the picture (as on the barrel) were painted with a slightly dry brush. Areas of the background were lightly rubbed down with a kneaded eraser. Colored inks, because of their high transparency, will not gray the pencil lines.

You learn to draw by drawing

Here are the assignments you are to send in

Assignment 1 — Plates 2 or 3

Make a drawing in ink on either Plate 2 or 3. Work directly within the outlines. After studying pages 16 through 25 you will decide whether you want to do Plate 2 in pen and ink or Plate 3 in brush and ink. Send in only one plate.

Assignment 2 — Plates 4 (A or B) or 5

Study pages 26 through 53 and decide which of the tone mediums, wash or opaque, you wish to send in for criticism.

If you select opaque, work directly on Plate 5. We've included an extra plate on which you may practice.

If you select wash, choose either drawing A or B on Plate 4. Do not paint on the plate. Instead, transfer the outlines of the picture you choose to a piece of 11 x 14-inch illustration board.

Here's how to transfer

Lay a piece of tracing or visualizing paper over Plate 4 and trace the outlines of the picture you select — A or B. All you need is a guide for your wash drawing similar to the outlines on Plates 2, 3, and 5. Then make a transfer sheet and trace the outline onto the 11 x 14 illustration board, following the instructions, step by step, at the bottom of page 17, Lesson 21. (You may substitute cleaning fluid or cigarette lighter fluid for the thinner referred to in Step 1.) If you do the wash drawing, be sure to read the directions below the picture on Plate 4.

Send in only one picture for Assignment 2 — either 4A, or 4B, or 5.

Here is the practice work you should do

Our purpose in this lesson is to introduce you to the two basic tools for making line drawings in ink — the pen and the brush — and the two basic water mediums for making tone drawings — wash and opaque.

We do not expect you to quickly master any of the mediums in this lesson. It will be enough if you acquaint yourself with these basic mediums and learn the fundamentals of handling them. You'll have many opportunities to improve your skill and use the other mediums in future assignments. That's why we've asked you to concentrate on only one line and one tonal medium at this time.

Practice the strokes on pages 18, 19, and 23. Then experiment on your own. Make drawings of various objects (such as the chick, rock, can, and stump on page 19) which you can interpret with these different strokes. Analyze the types of lines used to create different textures — as in the examples on pages 20, 21, 24, and 25.

Working on illustration board, practice laying flat and graded washes like those you see on page 28 and indefinite blending as shown on page 29. Then make a number of wash drawings. Select simple subjects to try out your first efforts with wash, such as the picture on page 27.

After you have thoroughly studied pages 40 through 53, squeeze out on your palette a series of opaque tones like those shown on page 40. Become acquainted with this medium. Follow the mixing and blending directions on pages 42 and 43 and create varied effects like those you see on pages 44 and 45.

Next, select some simple objects and make paintings of them in opaque. Select box-like forms on which you can practice laying flat, even tones; cylindrical objects that require modeling or shading; and others (like wood or rock) so you can try textures like those on pages 44 and 45.

Materials you will need

Pens — Five different points — coarse, medium, fine, very fine and flexible, and a crowquill. Also a regular penholder and a crowquill penholder.

Brushes — A No. 3 and No. 5 water-color brush for ink, wash, and opaque. A ½-inch square-tip sable or ox-hair brush will be useful (but not essential) for larger washes.

Ink — A bottle of black waterproof India ink.

Wash — Water-color lampblack or retouch black.

Opaque — A good set of opaque water colors consisting of black, dark gray, medium gray, light gray, and white. They may be in tubes or jars. You may mix your own grays from black and white as described on page 41.

Paper — Several sheets of 11 x 14-inch white drawing paper. Also, several sheets of tracing or visualizing paper.

Illustration board — Several sheets — size 11 x 14 inches.

While waiting for your criticized lesson to be returned, go ahead with your study of Lesson 2. However, wait until your criticized lesson is returned to you before you finish the work on the assignments for Lesson 2.

Before mailing

Print your name, address and student number carefully in the lower left-hand corner of each plate. (Do this with each of the assignments you send in.)

Your lesson carton should contain:

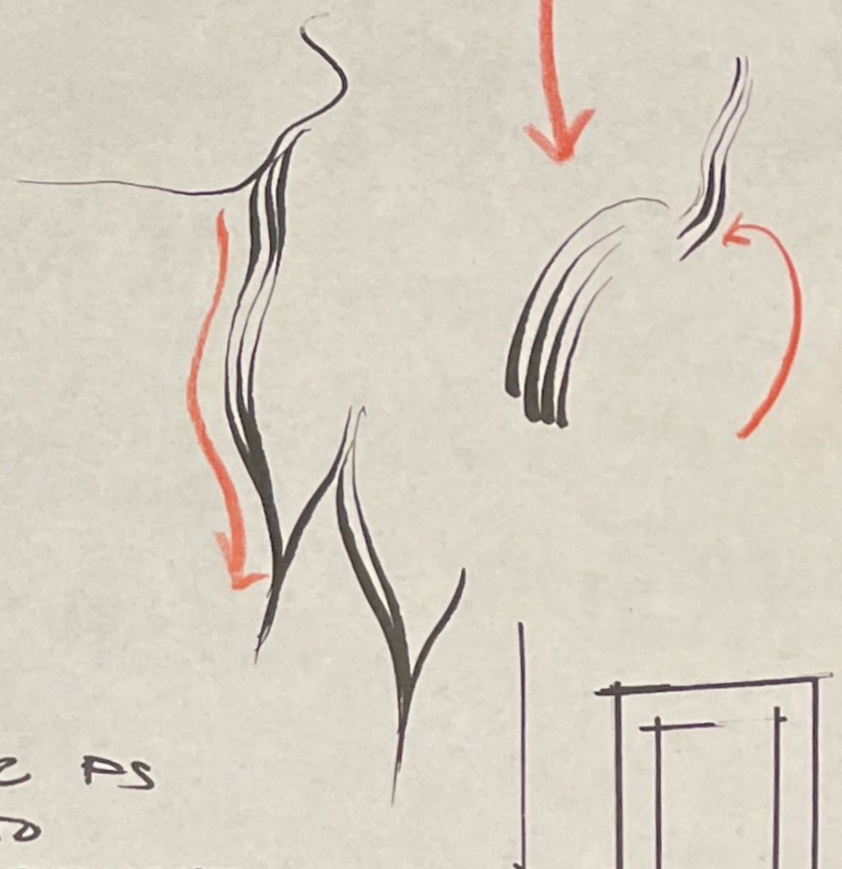
1 Ink drawing — Plate 2 or 3
1 Wash or opaque — Plate 4A, or 4B, or 5
1 Return shipping label filled out completely

Mail this carton to:

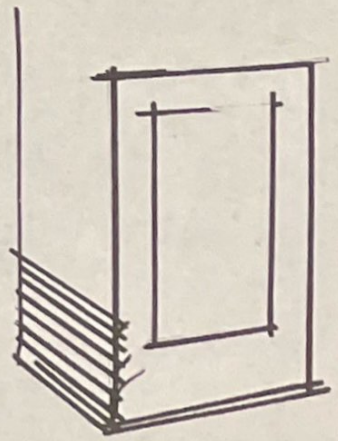
Famous Artists Course
Westport, Conn.

I USED Gillott #290
PEN POINT TO DRAW
VARIED PRESSURE
STROKES

PEN STROKES
FOLLOW FORM



USE RULER AS
GUIDE TO
DRAW STRAIGHT
LINES



PAUL MACKENDRICK
BOX 35 ROUTE 1
42-1-0217

Pen and Ink

You can control the tones in this drawing by carefully observing the width of the pen lines and the space between them. Use a flexible pen to draw the varied pressure lines in the corn husks and basket.

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Brush and Ink

Make your brush strokes follow the form in the entire drawing even though areas of it appear as solid black. Use the ruling method shown on page 23 to draw the frame.

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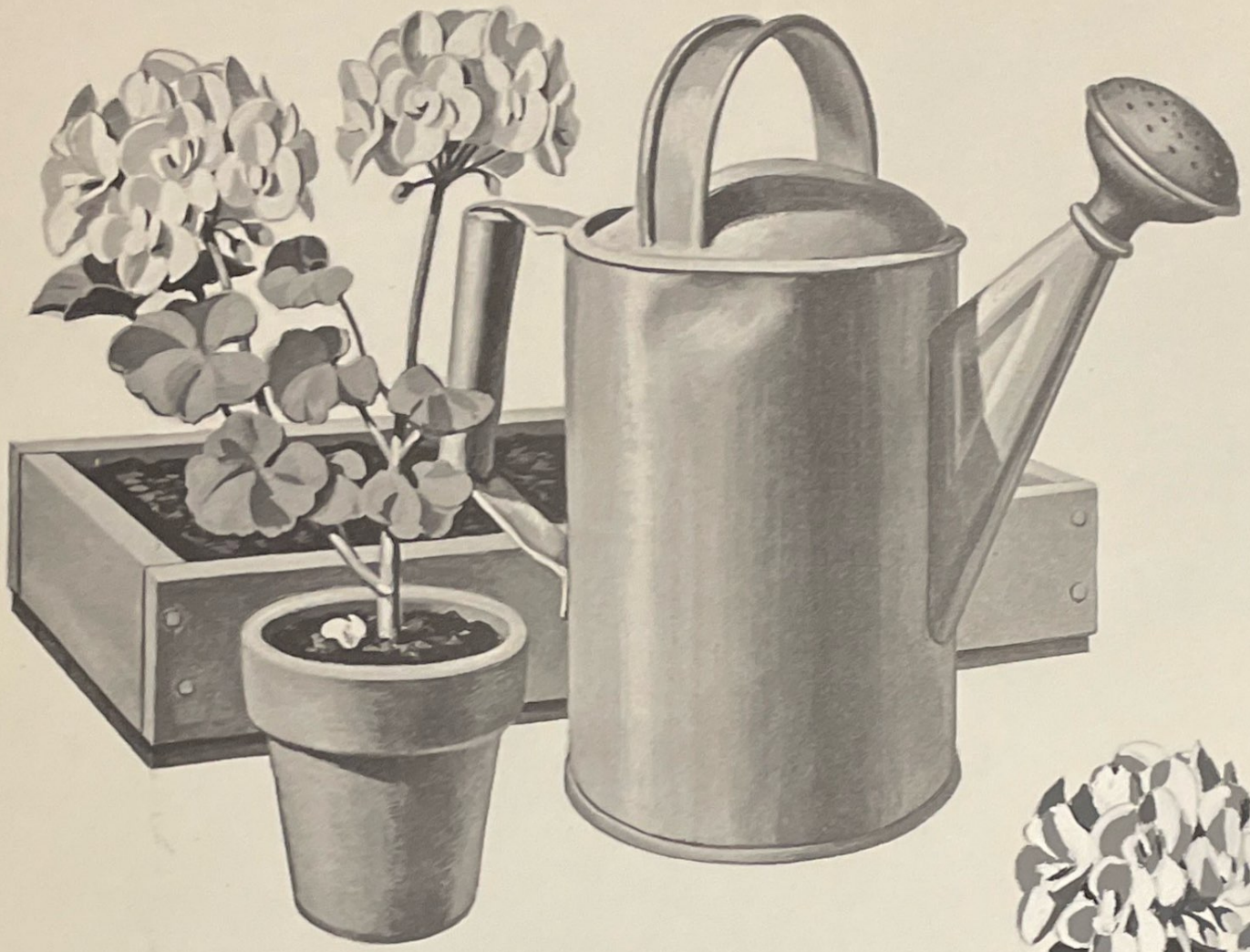
A

B

Wash

A (1) Grade sky from dark to light. Float wash on, beginning at top, adding more and more water as sky lightens toward horizon. Let dry. (2) Beginning at horizon, lay in wash with clean water. Gradually add more and more lampblack as you work toward the bottom. Let dry. (3) Lay in flat shapes of shore and lighthouse, starting at top of lighthouse, working down and over to left. Keep areas only wet enough to prevent streaking. Let dry. (4) Start at large post and work down over to right. Lay in dark foreground of dock and boats. (5) Add black accents — edge of dock, boats, etc.

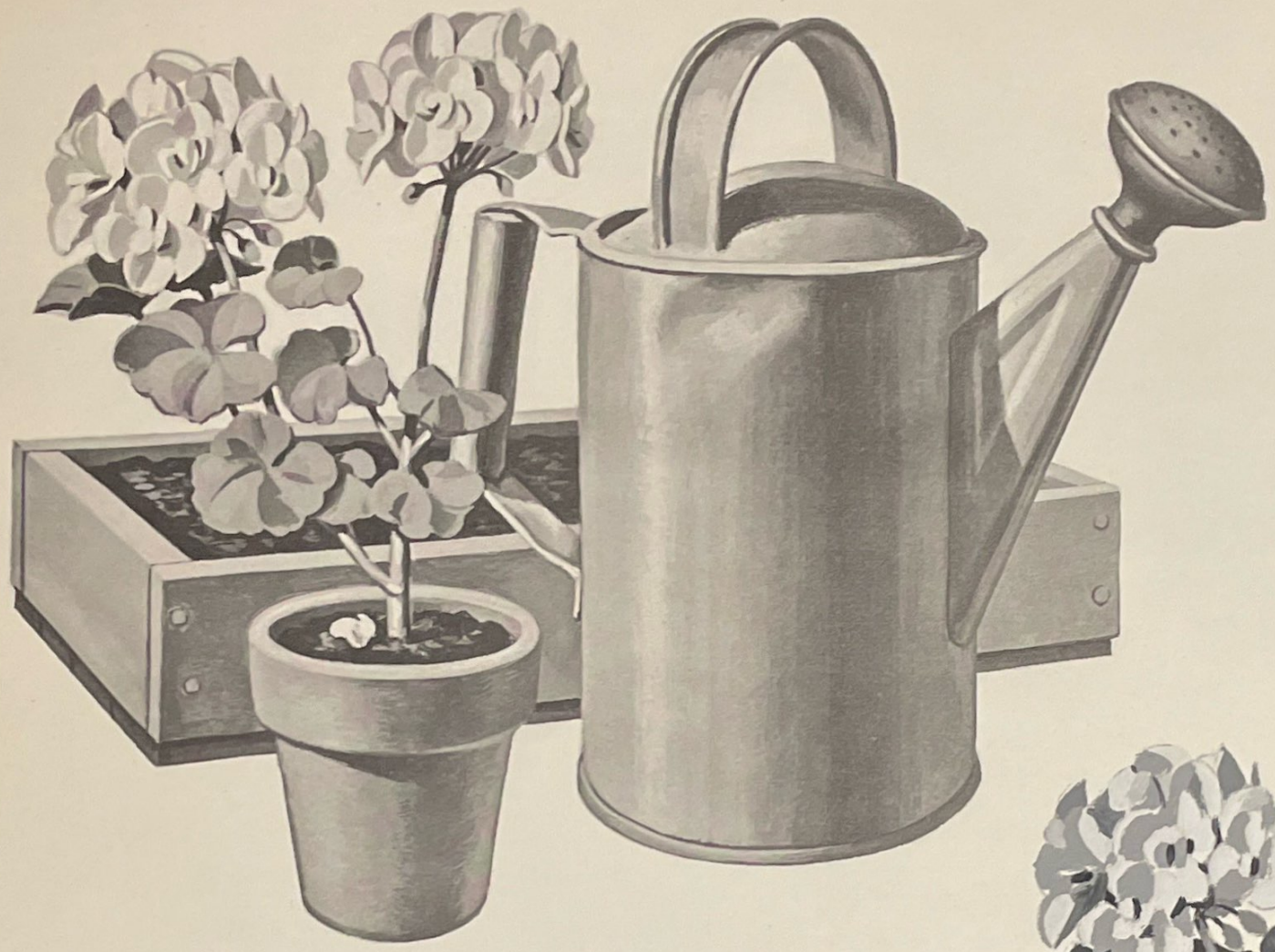
B (1) Wet sky area thoroughly with clean water. While still wet, add cloud shapes as in sketch. Remember, with indefinite blending, some of the most interesting shapes are accidental. Don't attempt to match originals exactly. (2) Lay in roof and side of barn in single flat wash. (3) Turn your board sideways and lay graded wash on silo, starting with clean water next to barn. (4) Lay graded wash on foreground area, starting with clear water and add dark overtones as you work down. (5) Paint in darker value on side of barn. Let dry. Add accents of door and shadows beneath eaves. (6) Add hill as flat wash. (7) Finally, add fence and slightly darker accents of grass.



Opaque water color

Apply this paint at the consistency of rich cream. To lighten a tone, add a lighter gray or white, not water. None of the paper should show through opaque paint.

PAUL MACKENDRICK
BOX 35 ROUTE 1
42-1-0227



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